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By the KING'S BARGEHOUSE near LAMBETH CHURCH.



2031. f. 27.







A Public Audience at El Fesh

N. Y. C.

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HISTORICAL ACCOUNT
OF THE MOST CELEBRATED
VOYAGES,
TRAVELS, AND DISCOVERIES,
FROM THE
TIME OF COLUMBUS
TO THE
PRESENT PERIOD.

"Non spēs inde tulit collectas sedula feras." Ovid.

By WILLIAM MAVOR, LL.D.

VOL. XXIII.

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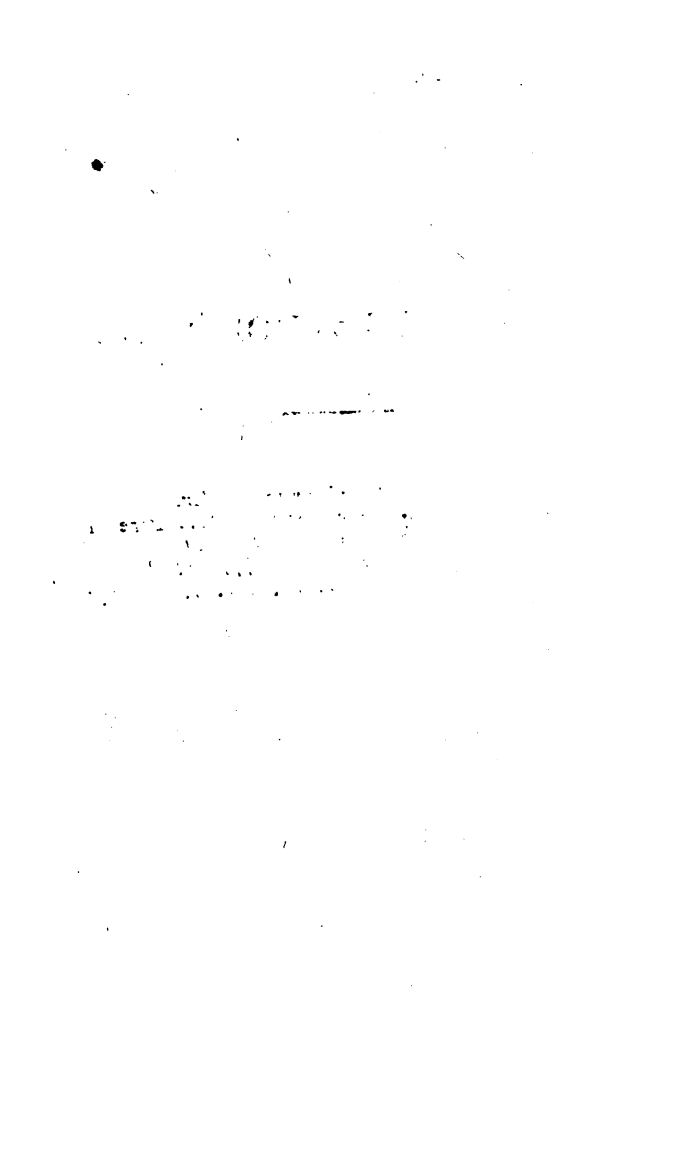
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TRAVELS
IN
EGYPT AND LYBIA,
BY
MR. BROWNE,
FROM THE YEAR 1792 TO 1799.

DISCOVERIES relative to Egypt, the former seat of the Ptolemies, and the renowned emporium of the East, once celebrated for its splendor, wealth, and power, and now esteemed for its magnificent remains, are in themselves peculiarly interesting to the literary world, and evidently derive a new advantage from every recent circumstance, transmitted to Europeans, by such persons as devote their time and abilities to a strict examination of that famous country, and its numerous curiosities.

Among travellers of this description we should be unpardonable to omit Browne, whose prudence, zeal, and perseverance are alike deserving of our admiration and our praise; and whose labours have been justly estimated by a discerning public, as a valuable addition to the general stock of useful knowledge and agreeable entertainment.

After a pleasant voyage of twenty-six days from the coast of Britain, Mr. Browne arrived, on the 10th of January, 1792, at Alexandria, which, though formerly the principal monument of a conqueror's magnificence, now retains but few vestiges of its pristine grandeur.

The chief remains of the ancient city, as described by our author, are an imperfect colonnade near the gate that leads to Rosetta, and an eminence in the south-east, which is known by the name of the Amphitheatre. Of the suburb, denominated Necropolis, or the City of the Dead, there are no vestiges worthy the attention of a traveller. The walls are of Saracenic structure, and consequently not coeval with the ancient dimensions of the city. They are in several places more than forty feet in height, and apparently twenty on the lowest part. These, being flanked with towers and very substantial in themselves, form an admirable defence for the inhabitants against the predatory incursions of the Bedouins, and the hostile approaches of the Mameluke cavalry.

The houses at present occupy but a small portion of Alexandria, the remainder consisting of extensive gardens and waste grounds, that are entirely covered with ruins. From the former of these the natives are well supplied with fruit and vegetables; and from the latter, fragments of sculpture, ancient coins, and pieces of precious marble are frequently dug by the Egyptian labourers, or discovered to the passenger by successive showers of rain.

The eastern harbour, usually frequented by *European vessels*, is rendered extremely disagreeable by its rocky bottom, and by partaking of the

the agitation of the sea during the influence of certain winds. About twenty ships, however, may securely anchor, with due precaution; but the greater part of the harbour is nearly filled with rubbish, and as the water is removed several fathoms from the gate of the old custom-house, which it formerly reached in the memory of the present inhabitants, it seems probable that the sea is retiring, and that nature contributes to the ruin of this port.

The old port, which is exclusively appropriated to the use of Mahometans, is tolerably spacious, and affords excellent anchorage, as there is a depth throughout of near six fathoms.

The city is erected on part of the isthmus and the peninsula, and towards the eastern extremity a dilapidated fort is seen, which is connected with the continent by a mole of stone, furnished with wrought arches, and sheltered by a wall on the west, that is also in a ruinous state.

The houses are commonly more than one story high, built of stone, and admirably suited to the mode of living that prevails among the inhabitants. A flat roof is found to be the best security against the rain, which occasionally falls in the autumn, and consequently every native prefers such a form for the top of his residence.

The citizens are supplied with water from seven reservoirs*, constructed of massy timber, which still remain of a series, that in all probability was formerly continued from one extre-

* These reservoirs are most probably in their original state, as it seems very unlikely that the modern Alexandrians should have substituted timber for stone, in a place where the former is very scarce and the other extremely plentiful.

mity of the city to the other, in order to preserve a sufficient quantity of water during the annual subsidence of the Nile; but as these are situated at a considerable distance from the most populous part, a number of poor persons gain a subsistence by carrying water from house to house upon camels, and for each camel's load they receive a sum that is equivalent to twopence of English money.

The only monuments of antiquity, that retain the least degree of perfection, are the obelisk, the column usually termed of Pompey; and a sarcophagus, of serpentine marble, which is used as a cistern in the great mosque. As the latter curiosity is exceedingly rich in hieroglyphics, and has received but little injury from the corroding tooth of time, a person, who had for some time farmed the customs, ventured, on his retiring from Egypt, to negotiate for the sale of this precious relic to an European, who designed to present it to the emperor of Germany. Previous to its embarkation, however, the secret was divulged, and the citizens insisted so loudly, that the property of their mosque was inviolable, that the projected scheme was prudently given up, and the chest permitted to continue in its place, where, since that occurrence, it has been watched with such unremitting vigilance, that it is now extremely difficult for a traveller to obtain a sight of it; consequently Mr. Browne was precluded from presenting the public with so minute a description as would have been congenial with his own desires.

The flocks and herds that are brought up for the consumption of the citizens, are pastured on the herbage in the vicinity of the canal; at night, however,

however, they are driven within the walls of the city, and are likewise brought thither for protection, when any of the hostile tribes are encamped at a small distance.

Wherever a vegetable mould is discovered, the soil is light and generally fertile; but, in all probability, it has been brought from some other part, as the natural soil consists entirely of sand or stone, and is consequently unfit for the purpose of cultivation. The gardens already alluded to, are pleasantly sprinkled with a variety of esculent herbs, and roots may be raised without any other labour than that of watering. Orange and lemon trees are found in small quantities, and dates are cultivated in great abundance, as the fruit is very profitable to the proprietors of the ground, and the cheerful foliage of the trees forms an agreeable contrast to the whiteness of the buildings, and the dry, sandy soil, by which they are encompassed. The other fruit-trees, which seem peculiar to the place, are the kishné and the nebbek; the former of which is likewise found in the West Indies, and the latter bears a fruit that resembles the cherry in size and formation, but in colour and flavour approximates to the apple.

The population of Alexandria, comprising Mahometans, Greeks, Armenians, and Jews, may be computed at twenty thousand souls, though, on account of his short residence, Mr. Browne was unable to decide with accuracy upon this point.

The Greeks have a church and convent, pleasantly situated upon a gentle acclivity among the gardens, but only containing three or four religious. The Franciscans of Terra Santa

Santa have also a church and monastery. The Armenians have a church, and the Jews are permitted to perform their devotions in a synagogue:

The houses of the European consuls and merchants are all erected near each other to the east of the city, and close to the sea-shore, where the inhabitants usually associate with each other, and retain all the customs of Europe, without insult or disturbance, as from our author's observation on the nations, he is led to believe that when any stranger has experienced uncivil treatment, it was in effect the result of his own imprudence; and, notwithstanding the heavy charges that are commonly brought against the Egyptians by historians, respecting their traffic with the Franks, our author ventures to affirm, that the natives are as frequently duped by the European merchants, as the latter by the Egyptian factors, whom they are necessitated to employ.

The command of the fort, and the military who are stationed in the city, are committed to the hands of a sardar, who is either a cashef, or an inferior officer* of the beys; but the internal government is vested in the citizens. The commerce of Alexandria is very considerable, and its revenues are estimated at two hundred and twenty-five thousand pounds sterling.

Among the various articles that are exported to Constantinople and other places, are coffee, rice, and raw leather. Saffron and senna are

* The *cadi*, or chief magistrate, is an Arab, who receives his authority from Constantinople; the others are the *sekechs* of the four sects, and the *imams* of the two principal mosques,

also taken in exchange by the Frank merchants for the produce of their respective countries. The former of these is cultivated in Egypt, and the latter is either brought by way of Suez, or from Nubia, and the vicinity of the first cataract.

The imports are likewise considerable, comprising, among many others, timber for house or ship building, from Candia or the Archipelago; copper, rough or manufactured, from Constantinople; red coral, from Leghorn; and glass beads, &c. from Venice. The consumption of broad cloth was formerly about eight hundred bales, but since the commencement of hostilities between the European powers, its price has risen so considerably, that many of the inhabitants are constrained to make use of their native manufactures.

The navigation between Alexandria and Rosetta is performed with small vessels, of from fifteen to fifty tons burthen, which deposit the merchandise at Rosetta, from whence they are conveyed to Cairo in boats of another construction.

Activity, perseverance, and accuteness, are among the leading characteristics of the Alexandrians, hence they are admirably disposed by nature for that perpetual hurry of business, which is attached to the transit of merchandise, and their attention to every department is so remarkable, that if various causes occasionally operate to the stagnation of commerce, they are conscious that no portion of blame can be possibly attributed to themselves. They are likewise remarkable for the facility with which *they learn foreign languages; but their own*
Arabic

Arabic is very impure, partaking greatly of the Turkish and other dialects.

With respect to their political concerns, the Alexandrians are rather disobedient and intractable towards the Mameluke governors, whose public orders are not unfrequently opposed; and the present beys are considered by the citizens as rebels against the authority of the Porte. A mutual jealousy naturally prevails between the parties, as the beys are anxious to subjugate the the Alexandrians to the same yoke that is imposed on the rest of the Egyptians, and the citizens are equally zealous to preserve that imperfect autocracy, which they have hitherto contrived to maintain by fertility of expedient, or occasional subterfuge.

In order to throw some light upon the character and situation of the late government, Mr. Browne relates the following historical anecdote.—In consequence of some opposition to the public measures of the rulers, Murad Bey, who had the jurisdiction of this district, sent a cashef to Alexandria, with an order to shut up all the warehouses appropriated to commercial concerns, and to arrest the person of Shech Mohammed el Missiri, whose eloquence and activity were equally known and dreaded by the governors. On the arrival of the cashef, the greater part of the citizens assembled in the principle mosque, where they unanimously agreed to return him to his employer, and at the same time to expel the superintendant of the customs from the city, as they had long groaned beneath his *oppression* without any redress from the bey, to whom they had repeatedly made their *complaint*. This resolution was immediately put in force.

force, and both parties were compelled to depart the same night, while orders were issued out for the fortification of the city, and the inhabitants furnished themselves with proper weapons of defence. In this situation they continued for about a month, when they received intelligence of two cashefs, who were arrived at Rosetta with a body of troops, which are commissioned to chastise the Alexandrians for their contumacious behaviour. A deputation was accordingly sent to Rosetta, in order to inform the cashefs that the citizens were willing to receive them peaceably, if they came without any hostile intention; but, if on the other hand, they expected to reap any benefit from violent measures, they would assuredly find themselves opposed by the collected force of all the inhabitants.

On the arrival of the messengers, however, they found that the pretended troops were merely the domestics of a person of quality, who had formerly filled the office of Yenktchery Aga, and who now accompanied the cashef that had been recently driven back. To the message of the Alexandrians, the cashef replied, that he had no other view but to satisfy himself respecting the loyalty of the citizens towards the government, as Murad Bey had received the news of their warlike preparations, and consequently feared that they were agitated by a spirit of disaffection. After this declaration he remained about a fortnight with the citizens, who convinced him that they were in no sense intimidated at his arrival, and finally dismissed him *with a small present from themselves, and some trifles that were devoted to his use by the European residents in the city.*

Mr. Browne, having obtained some information at Alexandria, relative to the Temple of Jupiter Ammon, resolved, if possible, to explore its curious remains, and therefore engaged a person to attend him, in quality of an interpreter, and agreed with some Arab traders for the conveyance of his baggage, and for a safe conduct among the other tribes of their nation, who might be probably stationed with their flocks along the coast.

With these precautions, and every requisite preparation, our author quitted the city, with his conductors, on the 24th of February, 1792, and made choice of the route that was nearest the sea, as being the same that Alexander had chosen for the march of his soldiers; while the Arabs were equally pleased, as it afforded an exuberant pasturage for their cattle. During the first day they merely proceeded about eight geographical miles, in which space they discovered the foundations of several buildings; but, on account of the imperfect state of the remains, it was impossible to determine either on the purpose for which they were erected, or whether the architecture itself was ancient or modern.

Their route now lay along the coast for about seven days, during which they seldom lost sight of the sea. After quitting the rocky soil of Alexandria, they entered upon one that was level, smooth, and sandy, and occasionally spotted with small patches of verdure, that served *at once* to relieve the eye from the disagreeable effect of the general sterility, and to yield a *timely refreshment* to the patient, but suffering camels.

The provisions of the travellers consisted of several kinds of preserved meat, that is usually prepared by the orientals, who undertake long journeys, and who obviate the inconveniency of salt provision by the use of a clarified butter, called mishli, that is brought to Cairo, from Western Tartary, and will keep perfectly good for several years. For the horses they were necessitated to carry a supply of cut straw and barley.

In the places where they occasionally halted, were discovered jerboas, tortoises, lizards, and a few serpents. On the thorny plants they observed a surprising quantity of snails, that are eaten with avidity by the Arabs. Wild rabbits were seen in the vicinity of the springs, and the tracks of the ostrich and antelope were frequently found in the sands. Scarcely any birds were noticed except a few of the marine kind, and a small hawk, that was killed by one of the travellers.

Several small parties of Bedouin shepherds were encamped on the road with their respective flocks, and regaled the European and his companions with new milk, dates, bread, &c. from a pure principle of hospitality. One party, indeed, were rather contentious for a tribute on passing; but as their power was considerably inferior to that of the caravan, their demand was prudently relinquished.

Having travelled about six hours, on the 4th of March, they refreshed the camels at a well that afforded an excellent supply of water, and then, leaving the coast, proceeded in a south-westerly direction till the 7th, when they reached the village of Karet am el Sogheir. This place, though independant, is wretchedly built, and its inhabitants are equally remarkable for
thei

their filthiness and poverty. Some fresh water, fuel, and a small quantity of mutton, were, however, procured by the travellers from the Shech el Bellad, whose hospitality was awakened by a well-timed distribution of presents.

Resuming his journey, our author perceived that the country was finely embellished with date-trees, and tolerably supplied with water for about a mile and a half; the scene was then changed, during a progress of five hours, to the same kind of barren rocks and arid sands, that have already been described; and for more than eight hours afterwards he was employed in traversing an extensive sandy plain, that was, in many places, completely covered with a pellicle of salt.

On the evening of the 9th, the travellers arrived at a small, fertile spot, denominated Siwa, that is encompassed on every side by desert land. Here they proceeded through a grove of date-trees to the town, which gives a name to the district, and seated themselves in a misjed, or oratory, adjoining the tomb of a reputed saint; till they were perceived by the chiefs, who then congratulated them upon their safe arrival, with a mixture of gravity and simplicity that is peculiar to the Arabs; conducted them to an apartment; and presented them with some boiled meat and a large dish of rice.

It is here proper to remark, that the attendant of our author, knowing the implacable hatred of the Mahometan Arabs against a Frank or European, had thought proper to introduce *him as a Mameluke*; but as their arrival happened just before the hour of evening prayer, *when the inhabitants strictly dispose themselves to their devotion*, and as Mr. Browne was then
unab

unable to speak the Arabic language so fluently as was requisite to cover the deception, it was remarked that he did not join in prayer with the congregation, and this naturally aroused a suspicion, which obliged the interpreter to give a full and satisfactory explanation. Finding that their guest was a Christian, the shechs were apparently much surprised at his having penetrated so far, with much difficulty and expence, without having any urgent business that might account for so voluntary an exposure of his person. They were, however, all inclined to pardon his temerity, on account of a valuable present which he had brought for their acceptance, except one of them, who, together with the populace, was greatly incensed at the insolence of our author, who had presumed to personate a follower of their prophet, and had publicly appeared in the dress that was peculiar to the believers of the Koran. For some time they declared that he should either return instantly, or embrace the faith of Mahomet, or otherwise they would assault the place of his residence. This fury, however, was gradually subdued by the remonstrances of the more moderate; and, at the expiration of four days, he was permitted to walk abroad, and to examine the curiosities of the place without molestation.

Having provided himself with some requisite instruments, Mr. Browne set out from his lodging, with his attendants, and proceeded for about two miles, between some pleasant gardens, to a small building of undoubted antiquity, called by the natives, "the Ruins, or Birbé." This little edifice, containing but one apartment, was constructed of massy stones, exactly similar to those
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which compose the pyramids, and originally covered with six solid blocks that reached from wall to the other. Its width was about fifteen feet, its height eighteen, and its length thirty-two. The principal entrance is by a gate, that is situated at one end, and two doors open opposite to each other near the same extremity. The other end is much dilapidated, but from a contemplation of various analogous circumstances, it is sufficiently evident that the building has not suffered any material diminution. There is not the least reason to imagine that any other edifice was formerly attached to it, but rather by the sculpture, which still remains on the exterior of the walls, such a supposition is utterly precluded.

Three rows of emblematical figures, apparently intended to represent a procession, were observed in the interior, where the figures of Isis and Anubis are conspicuous, and the proportions are those of the Egyptian temples in miniature; the spaces between them are filled with hieroglyphic characters. The soffit is also decorated in a similar manner; but one of the stones having fallen in, breaks the connection. This curious place, so worthy the attention of a traveller, naturally induced Mr. Browne to make some enquiries relative to its original use, or such traditions as might probably have been handed down to posterity respecting it; but the natives appeared entirely ignorant of these points, and merely asserted, that they supposed *it to contain hidden treasures, and to be the occasional retreat of evil spirits.*

From an examination of the circumjacent soil, it appeared that other buildings had been
former

formerly erected at a small distance from the ruin : some hewn stones were likewise observed by our author, but they afforded no trace of sculpture to gratify his curiosity, nor could he suppose, from the nature of the adjacent rocks, which were a kind of sandy stone, and extremely dissimilar to those of the fabric, that the materials could ever have been prepared on the spot.

After spending some time in searching for other ruins, which had been mentioned by the natives, but were, in reality, no other than detached pieces of the rock, Mr. Browne returned to the shechs, who had kindly provided him a dinner, beneath the shady branches that embellished their garden, where he cheerfully partook of their hospitable fare, without the dread of molestation or impertinent intrusion.

Next day he was conducted to some apartments in the rock which, though destitute of ornament or inscription, have been hewn out with a considerable degree of labour, and bear the appearance of places of sepulture, as several human bones and parts of skulls were discovered. These melancholy relicks had all undergone the action of fire, but whether they were deposited in this manner by a people in the habit of burning their dead, or whether they have been burnt in their detached state, by the present inhabitants, must be difficult to determine ; though the size of the catacombs, which were twelve feet long, six wide, and about six feet high, seem to yield a convincing proof, that they *were originally designed for the reception of bodies in an unmutilated state.*

A monument so evidently Egyptian, being discovered in this remote quarter, induced our traveller to hope, that something more considerable might be found, if he proceeded farther. He therefore endeavoured to procure some intelligence from the Siwese and the Arabs, as the former have an equal communication with Egypt and Fezzan, and the latter traverse the Desert in all directions, and must be consequently acquainted with every spot, that was distinguished, either by its accommodations, fertility, or ancient ruins. They accordingly entered into conversation, with the greatest freedom, upon the subject of the roads, and readily described every thing of note, which they had observed in Elwahi, Fezzan, and other places; but when our author mentioned the site of the famous temple of Jupiter Ammon, they professed themselves entirely ignorant of any such remains, nor could they give the least account of another place which he alluded to, under the name of Santrich; they, however, told him of some ruins to the westward, but mingled their description with many ridiculous fables, and assured him that he could not possibly go thither, as the spot was entirely surrounded with water, and there were no boats.

From their account of this place, which they called Arafchié, he was fully convinced that it was not the Oasis* of Ammon; yet it was possible, that something might be there found that might eventually lead to a more important discovery, and therefore he resolved to proceed thither as soon as possible.

* Oasis signifies a cultivated spot, that is surrounded by deserts.

With this design, he agreed with two persons, of the poorer class of the natives, to conduct him to Araschié; and, provided the object of his search should not be found, they were to guide him to the first watering place, that should lie directly toward the south. He then employed himself in combating the difficulties that were started, concerning his expedition, and on the 12th of March, set out with his attendants, from the town of Siwa.

The Oasis, which contains this town, is about six miles long, and four and a half wide. A considerable quantity of rice is here cultivated, which, however, differs materially from that of the Delta, and the land produces a sufficiency of wheat for the consumption of the inhabitants; a large portion of the Oasis is richly embellished with date trees, olives, figs, pomegranates, apricots and plantains, and the gardens are extremely beautiful. Of water, there is an abundant supply, both salt and fresh; but the generality of the springs that furnish the latter, are tepid, and such is the effect of the water, air, and other circumstances, upon strangers, that they are usually afflicted, on their arrival, with agues and malignant fevers.

Though, during his journey from Alexandria, our author had been frequently annoyed by cold showers, and much incommoded by a sharp wind, the heat was literally oppressive at Siwa, notwithstanding it was so early in the season.

The government is vested in four or five shechs, who are commonly divided into factions, and, in reality, owe their advancement to the parties which they are able to form among the people; consequently, every measure of public utility

utility is greatly retarded, and the preservation of decorum is violated, on the slightest grounds, when the hostile families fire upon each other, from the houses, or in the streets, and many individuals retain the marks of revenge upon their bodies, for the residue of their lives.

The shechs perform the office of cadi, and have the entire administration of justice; but, either from their own debility, or want of respect in the people, the most heinous crimes are frequently committed with impunity. During Mr. Browne's residence at this place, a new born infant was inhumanly murdered, by being thrown from the top of a house; but as no means immediately offered to discover the criminal, the matter was dropped without farther investigation.

The complexion of the natives is rather darker than that of the Egyptians, and their dialect different; in the formation of their persons they approximate to the Arabs of the Desert. Their usual clothing consists of a white cotton shirt, with large sleeves, a red Tunisine cap, and shoes of the same colour. In summer they wear a blue and white cloth upon the shoulder, and in winter they are defended from the cold by a sort of blanket. The lower class, however, seldom wear much more apparel than what is absolutely required by decency.

Their household furniture merely comprises a few mats and some earthen ware, of their own manufacture, except among the most opulent, who are possessed of copper utensils.

Their food consists of flat, unleavened cakes, *half baked*; thin sheets of paste, fried in the oil of the palm tree; dates, milk, rice, &c. The consumption of animal food is very trifling, nor

22

are they commonly addicted to the use of coffee or tobacco. Their favourite beverage, is the liquor drawn from the date tree, by them denominated, "date tree *water*," though in reality it possesses the power of inebriating.

Their sect is that of Malik, their chief trade in dates, which they transport to Cairo and Alexandria, and their domestic animals are the hairy sheep and goat of Egypt, with a small number of camels and oxen.

Quitting Siwa, where the ground in the neighbourhood is usually covered with salt for many weeks after the rains, our traveller proceeded in quest of the ruins, at Araschié, with his interpreter and some attendants; and, at the distance of six miles, discovered a small building, of the Doric order, that seemed to have been originally designed for a temple, though no inscription was found to establish such an opinion; the materials were ordinary, consisting of calcareous stones, but the proportions were evidently those of the best age of architecture.

From hence he continued his journey for two days, without molestation, though greatly alarmed at the expectation of some hostile tribes, who were said to be in the neighbourhood, and, at the expiration of that time, they reached the place of their destination, which was found to be an island, in the midst of a small saline lake, in the vicinity of the plain of Gegabib.

It appeared to contain an abundance of large, misshapen stones; but nothing was discovered, that could be justly denominated ruins; nor was it indeed probable, that any such should be found in a place, that was totally destitute of trees and fresh water. Mr. Browne, however, was
anxious

anxious to satisfy his curiosity more fully, by approaching these pretended remains of antiquity, and accordingly forced his horse into the lake; but the animal was unable to keep his head above water, and terminated the observations of his rider, by throwing him, before he reached the island.

Having detached himself from his horse, (which so unfortunately stumbled at the commencement of the lake), and regained the dry land, our author now proceeded in a southerly direction, according to the agreement made with his guides; but finding, at the expiration of the third day, that this pursuit was equally fruitless with the former, he submitted to the importunity of the Arabs, who strongly advised him to return, as they had remained a whole night, without any supply of water; and, on the 2d of April, he arrived without any new occurrence at the city of Alexandria.

As Mr. Browne had been greatly indisposed with a fever and dysentery, that apparently proceeded from the use of brackish water, in his western journey, he now devoted a month to necessary repose and refreshment, after which, he prepared for his departure, with all possible alacrity, and on the 1st of May set out towards Rosetta.

After a progress of about four hours on horseback, he reached the village Aboukir, consisting of few inhabitants, though built in the vicinity of a small port, that is furnished with a fortress, where a *tsorbashi* resides, with some soldiers, *and collects a toll from travellers, who have occasion to cross the neighbouring ferry.*

1

At the distance of two miles from Aboukir, are the ruins of an ancient town, on the sea side, that are partly under water. The remains of a few columns are likewise visible. "This," says our author, "is what has been remarked, as the *Taporis Parva* of antiquity."

From hence, he proceeded along the latter part of the road, which is marked with short columns of burned brick, at certain distances, to Rosetta, where he arrived, after a journey of eight hours and a half, exclusively of the time taken up in crossing two ferries.

This city, which is unprovided with either walls or fortress, is built in an oblong, irregular form: its population, comprising natives, Franks, and Greeks, is considerable; its principal commerce*, the carrying trade, between Cairo and Alexandria; and its government vested in a subordinate officer, appointed by Murad Bey, to whom the jurisdiction of the district appertains.

The inhabitants are here esteemed more peaceable and courteous to strangers, than those of Alexandria or Cairo; and many learned men are found among them, who are well skilled in Mahometan theology and casuistry, and who devote the greatest part of their time to smoking and conversing, on the banks of their respective gardens.

The circumjacent country is equally fertile and enchanting, and Mr. Browne expresses himself agreeably affected with the contemplation of the verdant rice fields, the orange groves, and the shady date trees, that form a charming con-

* There is a cotton manufacture at Rosetta, but it is confined entirely to home consumption.

traff to the mosques and tombs, while the majestic Nile, after fertilizing so long a tract, reluctantly mingles with the waters of the ocean.

Some few remains of antiquity are found in the neighbourhood of Rosetta, though the city itself is modern. At the distance of two miles, the castle of Abu Mandúr stands in a very picturesque situation, where columns are frequently dug up.

Navigation is rendered extremely dangerous, below the city, on account of a bar which runs across the mouth of the Nile, and obliges the inhabitants to remove their goods, from the boats of Cairo, to others of a different construction, before they can proceed to Alexandria; yet, notwithstanding every precaution, the merchandize frequently receives much damage, by the boats striking on the banks of the river, when they are commonly overset and sunk.

As our author happened to arrive in the month Ramadán, when the place is remarkably cheerful, he found sufficient entertainment, in Rosetta and its inhabitants, to detain him five days; when, finding it impracticable to pursue his intended route by land, he embarked with a view of proceeding to Terané, and sailed with a fair wind to the canal of Menúf, where the water leaves the main channel, and flows through the canal, which approximates to the course of the river above the Delta. An unbounded plain here strikes the eye of the traveller, on each side of the water, and the numerous villages, erected on the banks, are apparently very populous, and surrounded with excellent land. The *peasants* are in reality extremely rich in cattle, and make a considerable advantage of the frequent

quent return of passengers, in their boats, yet, under the abuses of government, they find it indispensibly necessary to wear the appearance of poverty.

Having taken a small boat at Menúf, Mr. Browne now proceeded to Terané, which he safely reached in six hours, after counting more than a hundred different towns and villages, both on the eastern and western sides of the Nile, during his passage from Rosetta. One of these, which was apparently the most considerable on the east, was Fué, a place once very eminent for its commerce, though now diminished, in size and population; and Deirút was the largest town on the west, as Demenhur, which is more populous, was not visible from the river.

The town of Terané is situated on the left of the most western mouth of the Nile, at a small distance from the river. Its latitude is 30 deg. 24 min. Its buildings chiefly consist of unburned brick, but there are likewise some of stone; and its government and revenue, with that of the whole district, containing several villages, is usually entrusted to one of the cashefs belonging to Murad Bey. At the time of our author's visit, however, it was in the hands of a Venetian merchant, named Carlo Rossetti, who had been recently appointed consul general of the Emperor of Germany.

This gentleman, observing an increasing demand in Europe, for the production called Natron, which abounds in the lakes, at a small distance from Terané, supposed that an immense revenue might be raised, by obtaining an exclusive right, for the collection and exportation of this article.

As the natron had never proved of any advantage to the beys, and as Rosssetti had great interest with Murad bey, his proposals were accepted on the business, and he procured an authority over the district of Terané, nearly equivalent to that exercised in former times by the cahefs. He accordingly sent his nephew thither, to reside in quality of his deputy ; but the disposition of this young man was ill adapted to martial exercises, and the government of a people, with whom fear and obedience were nearly synonymous terms. His Sclavonian soldiers were likewise inadequate to the protection of the little parties, sent to fetch the natron, and Rosssetti soon afterwards sold a large share in the grant, which proved unequal to his sanguine expectations.

On Mr. Browne's arrival at Terané, he was politely received by Sre. Ferrari, the nephew of Rosssetti, to whom he had been recommended, and who now kindly invited him to reside at his house, during his stay, assuring him, at the same time, of his friendship and assistance, in whatever he might chuse to undertake.

One entire day was now devoted, by our author, to a ramble over that part of the Delta, which is opposite the town, and indicates the site of ancient structures, by many columns and other considerable remains. No inscriptions, however, were found, nor any thing that deserves a particular relation.

Rosssetti, whose house was enlivened by a neat garden, well stocked with useful plants, and *finely embellished* with fruit trees, had attempted some improvements in the suburbs, by planting trees, &c. but the natives were so far from
seconding

seconding his laudable design, that they refused to water the trees, and seemed to think their forbearance remarkable, in permitting them to remain without injury. From this mode of conduct, our author is inclined to suppose, that they had some secret suspicions, that were unexplained, or discontent at the appearance of novelty, which they might regard as the harbinger of evil; as the orientals are in general extremely partial to trees and water, and consequently would not act in so strange a manner, without some private distrust.

A party of Arabs being appointed to fetch natron from the lake, on the ensuing evening after Mr. Browne's arrival, Sre. Ferrari ordered five Sclavonians to accompany him, who accordingly commenced their journey, about nine o'clock at night, and proceeded in a western direction, till the next morning, when they obtained a seasonable refreshment, at a spring of fresh water, that rises among some rushes, in the vicinity of the lakes.

The eastern extremity of the western* lake was found to lie in 30 deg. 31 min. north latitude: its form was extremely irregular; the colour of the water an imperfect red; and the bottom, where visible, appeared as if it was covered with blood: in one part, where the water was greatly agitated by a spring, its depth was far greater than the height of our author, but the general depth was about three feet, and the more shallow parts were encrusted with salt to the thickness of near six inches.

* There is no material difference between the western and eastern lake, either in size, colour, or productions.

The surrounding soil was a coarse sand, ^{at} its surface seemed to partake of the character, natron, which is usually found in the lake, ^{about} the thickness of a cubit, or common* pike. In all the specimens that were shown to our traveller, he detected much alkali, but he was unable then to make such an analysis, as might have proved interesting to the public. At a small distance from the lake, natron is frequently found near the surface of a mountain, that seems to approximate to the natron of Barbary, and is of a lighter colour than the former.

In the vicinity of the lake, which is about a mile broad and four miles long, the country is destitute of water, and consequently barren. Some vestiges of buildings are found, that were apparently designed for convents, and three of these edifices still remain entire, and yield a peaceful abode to a few religious, of the Coptic church.

Two of these convents, viz. that of St. George and that denominated the Syrian, were visited by our author in this excursion, who found the buildings firm and substantial, though extremely ancient; the furniture simple; and the inhabitants equally harmless and hospitable.

The entrance to each convent is by a small trap-door, secured within by two great mill-stones; the manners of the monastics are perfectly consonant to the primitive ages, as their chief food is coarse bread and vegetables, and their usual beverage water, that is drawn from an excellent well within their own walls; they are

* The pike of Cairo is equal in length to eighteen inches.

their own menials and artificers, and their chief amusement consists in a small garden, that serves at once to refresh their spirits and supply their tables. On Mr. Browne's entrance, one of the superiors was discovered in the act of mending his shoes, apparently regardless of theological controversy. The other attempted to prove to his guest the Eutychian tenet of monothelism, and was highly gratified, when our author expressed himself fully persuaded by his arguments.

On Mr. Browne's enquiring for manuscripts, he was informed, that the monks were possessed of near eight hundred volumes, but he only saw an Arabo Coptic Lexicon, with a few other books in the Coptic, Syriac, and Arabic languages.

Having spent near three days in the contemplation of the lakes and the adjacent buildings, the attendants of our traveller began to grow impatient, and he was necessitated to return to Terané, from whence he reembarked in a small boat, after a short interval, and on the 16th of May arrived safely at Grand Cairo.

This city is situated on the east of the Nile, which devolves its majestic flood at a small distance; but the suburbs, viz. Misr el Attiké and Bulak, or the port, form two points of contact with the river. To the east and south-east of the city is a ridge of that extensive chain, which accompanies the Nile to Upper Egypt, sometimes receding to the distance of three miles, and at other places opposing its barrier to the progress of the stream. The northern side is bounded by an extensive plain, that exactly resembles the Delta, in the nature of its soil and productions.

Thor

Though a European traveller must certainly find himself disgusted with a view of the Egyptian capital, as compared with the cities of his own country, it is considered by the natives the most magnificent place under the canopy of heaven, and is emphatically styled "the matchless city, the mother of the world." It is, however, but justice to remark, that the extreme narrowness of the streets, which, to a stranger must appear contemptible, is indispensibly necessary to shield the inhabitants from the fierce effulgence of the meridian sun, and consequently must afford them a greater degree of pleasure, than they could possibly receive from any architectural prospect.

The length of the city, from north to south, may be estimated at about three thousand five hundred yards. This, however, greatly exceeds the dimensions from east to west. The principal street runs in a parallel line with the Chalige*. The houses are, in general, substantial and commodious, built of stone, two or three stories high, with flat roofs and latticed windows; the ground floor, being usually appropriated to the purpose of a shop, has no window towards the street.

The habitations of the rich are chiefly erected near a pool, called Birket el Fil, that receives the waters of the Nile from another part of the city; but the houses of European residents

* The Chalige, which pierces the city from north to south, is a public receptacle for all kind of refuse. Previous to the rise of the Nile, it is cleaned, and becomes a street; but, when filled by the increase of the river, it assumes the appearance of a canal, and is covered with boats.

all situated on the Chalige, and are consequently rendered extremely disagreeable by the noxious effluvium, that is commonly supposed to operate in producing the pestilence.

The palace of a bey consists of a square court, furnished with apartments for his Mamelukes; a harem for the women, and rooms for himself; one of which, viz. that where he usually sits in summer, is rendered very pleasant by a curious contrivance in the roof, by which a copious supply of fresh air may be obtained at pleasure. The apartments of the men are fitted up with equal neatness and simplicity, but those of the females are embellished with the most costly and splendid ornaments.

For the reception of wholesale goods, there are spacious, clean, and commodious warehouses; and retail dealers are accommodated with extensive buildings, for their various commodities, in every part of the city. Each trade, however, has its particular and allotted division.

Convenient markets are also established in every quarter, and coffee-houses are equally numerous, where the inhabitants generally devote the greatest part of the day to smoking and conversation.

Of the mosques, which are computed at more than three hundred, that called Jamma el Azher*, is the most magnificent, being ornamented with marble pillars and Persian carpets. A number of persons, distinguished for their knowledge of literal Arabic, and a profound skill in

* The Jama el Azher is a charitable establishment, from which some thousands of indigent ecclesiastics are supplied with broth and other articles.

theology, are supported by its revenue, under thech, who is an ecclesiastic of the highest order. It is enriched with a large collection of manuscripts, and lectures are read on various subjects that are called *scientific*, at Cairo, though in reality they are the very reverse of that appellation. The other mosques, that are most celebrated, are that of Ghouri el Hassanein, and that of Mohammed Bey Abudhabab. The latter is constructed of the richest materials, and is accounted a chef d'œuvre of eastern magnificence.

The mint, which is the only one for Egypt, is within the walls of the castle, built by the celebrated Yussuf Abu Moddagar Ibu Aiúb, who, in the sixth century of Mahommedism, bore the honorary title of Salaheddin. Previous to the invention of artillery, it was esteemed of great strength, though now entirely incapable of defence. The building, including the quarters of the Janizaries, and those of the Affabs, who are now extinct, occupies a considerable space. It is, however, extremely irregular, and the apartments of the pasha are equally destitute of elegance and convenience. The well is of a great depth, and must certainly have cost a profusion of toil in its formation, as it is hewn through a solid rock. The remains of Salah Eddin's palace are well deserving of the traveller's admiration, whose curiosity may be pleasantly gratified with an examination of a long apartment, that commands a capital view of the city, the Nile, and the adjacent country; several magnificent columns, that still resist the destroying power of time; and a chamber, appropriated to the fabrication of an embroidered cloth,

annually devoted to the use of the Kaba,
 & munificence of the Porte.

the vicinity of this castle is a mosque, of
 architecture, that contains the tomb of the
 Shafei, whither the women crowd on the
 metan sabbath, to procure substitutes, who
 visit the sepulchres of their deceased rela-
 while their own time is more agreeably
 oyed with the young gallants of the city.

the north-east of the city are some large
 & gardens, the property of the higher
 who occasionally divert themselves in these
 ts, which are considerably enlivened by an
 space, where the Mamelukes exercise their
 , and perform their military evolutions.
 e east is observable a continued series of
 , that stands beneath a naked mountain,
 ite sand and calcareous stone,

e city is likewise furnished with several
 spaces, among which is the Romeili, where
 of juggling are usually performed, by per-
 who pretend to numerous kinds of magio.
 zalls are entirely fallen to decay, but the
 are numerous, and two of them in parti-
 present a stranger with a rich display of
 nic architecture.

population of Cairo, including Arabs,
 Christians, Mamelukes, Greeks, Syrians,
 rmenians, with a few Jews, and residents
 various nations, may be estimated at three
 ed thousand souls. Mr. Browne supposes
 gypt may contain two millions and a half,
 , from a slight examination of an Egyp-
 own or city, a stranger would be led to
 this assertion. It is, however, merely ne-
 to remark, that a large proportion of the
 people

people find their only safety from an oppressive government, in the deepest obscurity, and consequently submit to every inconvenience with cheerfulness, rather than acknowledge themselves the inmates of any visible dwelling.

The Arabs, or lower class of Mahometans form the body of the people, and pride themselves greatly upon their origin. The Copts or ancient inhabitants, have a peculiarity of feature common to all of them, and highly interesting to an observant spectator. Their hair is dark, and frequently curled; their complexion is a dusky brown; their noses aquiline, their eyes black, and the form of their visage approximating to that which is seen in the ancient statues, mummies, and paintings. Their religion is a compound of the Monothelite heresy, the most glaring errors of the Roman church, and several absurdities of Mahomet. With the former, they believe in the solely divine nature of the Redeemer, and the procession of the Holy Ghost from the Father alone; with Catholics, they embrace transubstantiation; with the believers of the Koran, they make of frequent prostrations in their worship, public individual prayer, private ablutions, &c.

Their language may now be considered as extinct, though the epistle and gospel is still read in Coptic, at their monasteries. The psalm says our author, is a mere parrot, repeating dead letter in this part of the service; the verses are read in Arabic. Some Coptic scripts are, however, found in the convent. In all probability, the patriarch would be any curious person to examine and transcribe them.

Me

Melancholic in their temperament, but acute and industrious, the Copts accumulate money with equal steadiness and privacy. They are generally well instructed in penmanship and accounts, and may, upon the whole, be termed an ingenious people. An imprudent use of their distilled liquor may be reckoned among their failings, and may probably serve to establish the charge of licentiousness, which is brought against them by our traveller. Respecting their faith, they are perfect zealots, and their ecclesiastics are extremely numerous.

The Mamelukes, whose number is estimated by Mr. Browne at near twelve thousand, are military slaves, imported from Giagia, Circassia, and Mingrelia; besides others, who are taken captive in battle, or brought to Egypt by private merchants, on speculation. Particular attention is paid to these persons, who are carefully instructed in every exercise of strength or agility, and who usually repay the kindness of their masters with the warmest gratitude and most valiant services. Those who have a genius for literature, are taught to read and write, but the majority of them are deficient in those particulars; among whom, our author remarks, is Murad Bey himself.

The inferior Mamelukes constantly wear the military dress, which is distinguished from that of other Mahometan citizens, by a pair of large crimson drawers, of thick Venetian cloth, attached to their slippers of red leather; and a greenish cap, of a peculiar form, fancifully decorated with a turban. Their usual arms are, a pair of pistols, a dagger, and a sabre; but when engaged in battle, they are furnished with a brace

a brace of large horse pistols, and a battle-axe: they also wear an open helmet, and a suit of armour, consisting of interwoven links of steel under their dress. Their horses are of the finest Arabian breeds, and are frequently bought at the rate of 150*l.* or 200*l.* sterling.

As they are supplied with provisions by their masters, they have no stipulated pay; yet, from presents, rewards, and extortions, they contrive to raise a sufficient supply of money, either for avarice, or debauchery. Gay and volatile in their dispositions, they are commonly unprincipled in their means of acquiring pleasure, and are regarded by the Arabs as careless observers of the injunctions of their prophet. With respect to their courage, equestrian skill, extremeness of hardihood, and admirable use of the sabre, they certainly rank high among the best oriental troops; but in a regular battle, conducted by manoeuvres and rapid movements, they are completely eclipsed by the military of Europe.

The government of Cairo, and of Egypt in general, is in the hands of twenty-four beys: each of whom is chosen from among the Mamelukes, by the remaining twenty-three, though in fact, such an election is always determined by the appointment of the most powerful. Besides their dominion over certain districts of Egypt several of the beys receive other dignities from the Porte, to which are attached revenues, inherited, and frequently abused; such as those of the governor of the city, the accountant-general, the leader of the sacred caravan, and the governor of Upper Egypt.

Each of the other beys fills all the offices in his district with his own slaves, who are necessa-

sita

situated to render an account of the receipts, which partly serve to fill the coffers of their employers. Mr. Browne supposes that an opulent bey may have an annual revenue of from 30,000 to 50,000l. ; that of Murad Bey is more than double. The revenue of the inferior beys is computed at 15,000l. per annum.

An officer, called the mulla, who is annually appointed from Constantinople, is possessed of the chief judicial authority at Cairo, who, however, seldom acts but in cases of doubt and difficulty. There are likewise cadis in all the districts, whose revenue arises from a tenth of the value of whatever is litigated before them ; " their decisions," says our traveller, " are always speedy, but too often swayed by the omnipotent influence of gold."

The Shech el Bikkeri, having command over the shereefs, is an officer of great respect. There are likewise imams, or priests, of the four sects, who have each the entire direction of their adherents, and there are other exclusive jurisdictions, which, however, are not sufficiently important to interest the attention of our readers.

On cases of equity, each bey sits in judgment, when, notwithstanding their usual impetuosity, they display a considerable degree of acuteness and knowledge of characters. From the cashefs, or lieutenants over the towns and villages, who are commonly noticed for their ignorance, an appeal lies to the bey, who determines the cause, and usually employs a Copt to adjust their accounts of the revenues.

Among the considerable sources of revenue that appertain to Egypt are, the zechát, or tenth of merchandise imported into the country ; the charge

charage, or impost, on the production of lands; and the jizie, or capitation tax, exacted from the unbelievers, as a salvage for their persons, which, according to the precepts of Mahomet, the Mussulmen are not otherwise bound to spare.

The chief local tribute is a tax upon land, of from six shillings to six and eight pence, on every acre through the country, which yields the sum of 420,000*l.*; yet such is the rapacity of the beys, that they will frequently insist on receiving fifteen or eighteen shillings per acre, which at once raises this branch of the revenue to more than a million and a quarter.

Owing to the rebellious disposition of the Copts in Upper Egypt, an exemption, in favour of Coptic officers and ecclesiastics; and the taxation of the Greeks and Armenians in other places, the jizie is much less considerable in Egypt than might be supposed. The remaining part of the revenue is made up of forfeitures, small imposts, tolls on passing the Nile, and several parts of the interior; and a continued plunder of all ranks and denominations. Public baths, and places appointed for the sale of brandy, pay something to the government, and the article of salt bears a low impost on entering Cairo or Asfiût.

These articles form collectively the miri, or public revenue, of which 60,000*l.* should be annually sent to Constantinople, but is usually kept by the beys for the *nominal* reparation of mosques and other public buildings.

The patha, whose power has been nearly annihilated by the intrigues and ambition of the beys, receives, for his whole expences, the sum of 250*l.* per day. His establishment, however,

is so large, that this is not accounted a rich pashalik.

Murad Bey regularly draws five hundred half mahbûbs daily from the mint, for his pocket expences, and his wife is accustomed to receive the same; which, at the rate of five shillings the mahbûb, amounts to 125l. sterling, which is but an inconsiderable part of his disbursements.

A chief part of the lands in Egypt may be considered as divided between the government and the religious bodies, who perform the service of the mosques, and who have received their possessions either from the munificence of princes or the determination of individuals, who were anxious for the benefit of their posterity.

As the government claims a right to inheritance, and the fines paid on readmission are literally ruinous, persons who have landed property frequently make an appropriation to a mosque, when the lands become part of the wakf* of that establishment, and the claim of government is superseded. The appropriator, at the same time, takes such precaution, that his next heirs, or trustees on their behalf, shall regularly receive the rents, while any lineal descendant of the family shall exist, by paying a small proportion of their income to the ecclesiastic administrators.

A tenant of land seldom holds more than he and his family can properly cultivate; he is, however, by no means attached to the soil upon principles of villanage, but is always at liberty to remove to any other farm that may appear

* Wakf is a term that signifies the appropriation of property in such a way, that the proprietor's right shall continue, but the profit shall belong to some charitable establishment.

better suited for his purpose. Sometimes, however, families are connected with a particular spot for a considerable length of time. Mr. Browne affirms, that he has met with persons of this description in the vicinity of Affût, whose ancestors, of the fifth remove, had resided in the same habitation. "I used," said one of them (a very old man) "to smoke tobacco, but it cost me nearly a para* a day, and times are now growing so bad, that I am contented with a dry reed, till the master free me from these embarrassments.

The city of Cairo is furnished with a number of large and sumptuous reservoirs, in different parts, where water is given to travellers. Elegant and convenient baths are also extremely numerous, where the attendants are dexterous, and the charges very reasonable.

With respect to the majestic river of the Nile, from which the houses are supplied with water, and the adjacent lands are fertilized, its greatest breadth may be computed at two thousand feet; its motion is extremely slow, and its water always so muddy, that the natives of Cairo are obliged to put it into jars, previously rubbed on the inside with a composition of bitter almonds, before they can make use of it. Its rise seems much the same as in the most ancient times, viz. twenty-four feet in perpendicular height. The medium increase is about four inches a day, and always continues from the end of June till the beginning of September, when it gradually subsides till the following solstice. It abounds with

* A para is a small copper coin, washed with silver, and worth about a halfpenny.

a great variety of fish, the best of which is called the búti, something resembling the white trout, but frequently attaining such a size as to weigh fifty pounds. Exclusive of large and excellent eels: none of the fish have an exact resemblance to those of Europe.

Among several kinds of water fowl that frequent this river, may be noticed a large fowl, called the Turkey goose, whose flesh forms an agreeable and salubrious article of food. The crocodiles are apparently reduced in number, and seem to be chiefly confined to the district above Affút, where bathers are sometimes attacked and cruelly mutilated by those unwieldy animals. The other striking and ancient features of the Nile are, the rafts of belasses, or large jars, that are used for carrying water; small rafts of gourds, on which an individual conducts himself with a ludicrous dignity across the stream; and divers, who, by concealing their heads in pumpkins, approach the unsuspecting water-fowl, and seize them by their legs. Respecting the hippopotamus, which is said to abound in Nubia; Mr. Browne never saw or heard of any in Egypt.

From Cairo to Affúan, a distance of near three hundred and sixty miles, the banks of the river, exclusive of occasional rocks, resemble a succession of steps, and are clothed with all sorts of esculent vegetables, among which that useful plant, the bamea, is predominant. It usually grows to the height of three feet; its leaves are similar to those of a currant bush, and it produces *oblong aculeated pods*, that lend an agreeable flavour to the repast.

Of the Saracenic structure on the island Ronda, which has been repeatedly described by Europeans, as containing the mokkias, or Nilometer, our author observes, that its graduation is confined and imperfect, and should never be depended on; and during the Nile's increase, the criers are suborned to make such a report as is agreeable to the will of government; wherefore, those who wish to inform themselves correctly as to the increase of the river, should make their observation on some smooth surface, that is washed by the Nile, and perpendicular to its plane.

Previous to the discovery of a passage to India by the Cape of Good Hope, the commerce of Cairo was very extensive, but since that period it has gradually declined, and is at present restricted to the following articles, viz. coffee, odours, drugs, and gums, from Yemen; muslins, and various articles of cotton manufacture from Surat; shawls from Cashmir; and a portion of spices from Ceylon. It may still, however, be regarded as the metropolis of the trade of eastern Africa, as Tripoli is of the west. Slaves are brought from Abyssinia by way of Jidda and Mecca; caravans frequently trade to Sennaar, Dar Fúr, and Fezzan, from whence they bring gold dust, ivory, ostrich feathers, gum, drugs, &c.; and there is another occasional caravan from Morocco, that employs five thousand camels for the express purpose of merchandise. Part of these pass on to Mecca, and part remain to await the return of the pilgrims, while the merchants transact their own business. The other caravans are merely for the carriage of goods, and *their camels are annually supplied by the Arabs of the Desert.*

The exports to Europe have been already mentioned under the description of Alexandria; Hedjas in Arabia is entirely supplied with grain from Egypt, but with India and Jidda the trade is chiefly carried on by money; black slaves, coffee, and Indian goods, are sent to Constantinople, though for the most part they are conveyed thither by caravans. To Lybia are exported rice, flax, crude leather, and a small proportion of wheat.

Owing to the extreme facility with which the sugar-cane is cultivated in Egypt, a manufactory was formerly established at Cairo, for the purpose of supplying Constantinople with sugar, but as a capital was indispensibly requisite, government made such demands on it, as speedily crushed the trade. The sugar was of a close texture, well refined, and of a light white, though inferior in strength to that of the West Indies. It is now, however, exceedingly bad, and so scarce as to sell for fourteen pence per pound. There is a considerable manufacture of linen cloth made of the fine Egyptian flax; a second for sal ammoniac, which is of an excellent quality; and others for glass lamps, saltpetre, gunpowder, and coloured leather, for home consumption.

The curious method of hatching eggs, without incubation, is almost peculiar to Cairo, and has been frequently described by other travellers. A low-arched apartment of clay, with two rows of shelves, forms the oven, where the eggs are placed in such a manner as to partake equally of the heat without touching each other. They are slightly moved about every four hours, during the whole time of their remaining in the oven

oven, which never exceeds twenty-two days, as the chickens then free themselves from the shells, and are delivered to their proper owner, who pays the master of the oven so much a hundred for his care and attention. Those eggs which prove unproductive, are generally known to be such at the expiration of the first eight days, and on the delivery of the chickens they are likewise produced for the satisfaction of all parties.

During the ramadan, the following amusements are regularly exhibited: After breakfast, the people are employed in devotion, which occupies a considerable portion of time; the principal meal then summonses their attention, and the transaction of business, or the arrival of visitors, to pay their respects to the bey, fills up the interim till the commencement of the amusements, when the gerid and various other exercises are performed by day-light, and the evening is introduced with an exhibition of wrestling, in which the lower class of Egyptians show a considerable degree of vigour and activity, however deficient they may be in consummate skill. These are succeeded by male singers, whose plaintive melody has been the subject of remark to many European travellers. Next advance the story-tellers, who relate surprising scenes of romantic adventures, with astonishing readiness and rapidity of utterance. Then appear the wits, whose droll and unexpected similes yield the highest entertainment to their auditors, and the pleasures of the evening are terminated by the exertions of the rope-dancers, *female singers*, and women who play on musical instruments, and exhibit in their dances all that the *most luxurious imagination can possibly surmise.*

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To the south of Cairo, Miſr el Atike is pleasantly ſituated, and well inhabited. An extenſive moſque has been there recently reſcued from oblivion, by the mandate of Murad Bey, who, being informed that ſome treaſures were depoſited under the edifice, had recourſe to the fincſſe of pretending to rebuild it. He did, in fact, rebuild a part of the wall, and while the workmen were employed in clearing the foundation, they diſcovered a ſycamore cheſt, that was found to be full of ancient Arabic books, ſome of them written on vellum in the Kuphic character, and very beautiful. In this edifice about thirty-five columns ſtill retain their original poſition, the reſt have been reverſed, and ſet up again without any regard to order. The moſt perfect remain is a ſmall octagon building, in the centre of the moſque, ſupported by eight Corinthian pillars, with ſhafts of blue and white marble. Upwards of a hundred columns appear around; many arches of an elliptical form ſtill remain, and ſome inſcriptions are viſible on the weſt, which might have been the place of the original gate, as it is now of the modern.

From the convent of St. George, the ruins of an ancient city are clearly ſeen, aſcertained to have been the Babylon of the Perſians; at preſent, however, they merely conſtitute a heap of rubbiſh.

Bulak is an extenſive, irregular town, that has gradually riſen around the port. It is furniſhed with an excellent okal, or warehouse, chiefly appropriated to the reception of goods from Alexandria; embellished with a variety of handſome gardens; and rendered extremely lively by the great number of boats that crowd the river. Near

Nearly opposite Bulak, in the middle of the river, is an island, where Murad Bey has a kind of summer retreat, and some pleasant gardens. On the opposite coast is the village Embabil, famed for fine cattle and excellent butter.

In a more southerly direction is a considerable town, called Jiza, the walls of which are very extensive, and mounted with cannon; they have six half moons, are ten feet high, and three feet thick, and were originally raised for the purpose of resisting any hostile troops of cavalry.

In the southern quarter of this town, is a palace, originally built by Ismail Bey, and since completed and inhabited by Murad Bey. It is supplied with an abundance of apartments for the Mamelukes, and with every convenience that can possibly be desired, either for ease or luxury.

As Murad Bey has, of late years, judged it expedient to establish a marine, he has purchased a few European vessels, and has caused three or four to be built by the natives. Six of these vessels, the largest of which carries twenty-four guns, were moored before Jiza, at the time of our author's visit, from whence they could not be navigated till the season of the Nile's increase. They were all well appointed, and had their full compliment of marines, who were chiefly Greeks of the Archipelago, under the command of a native of Sagos.

The pleasure-boats, used by the great on the increase of the river, are exceedingly numerous. In form they are light and elegant, and have usually from four to eight rowers. Such as are appropriated to the use of the ladies are covered with wainscot, but those for the men

are either latticed, or left open at the sides; others are kept for hire, in the manner of the gondolas at Venice. They are used indiscriminately upon the Nile, and in a considerable canal, called the Chalige ibn Menji, which, from its opening near Bolak, extends to Bilbeis, where it mingles with another canal, and flows on to the lake Sheib.

In order to give his countrymen some idea of the personages who bore the sway over the people, during his residence at Cairo, Mr. Browne has given the following concise description of the most celebrated beys, viz. Ibrahim Bey, Murad Bey, Mohammed Bey Elfi, Ibrahim Bey el Uali, and Aiúb Bey el Zogheir, or junior.

The first of these is a tall, thin man, upwards of sixty years old; he is extremely avaricious, and has contrived, by his wealth and connections, to secure a large party in his interest. He is reputed dexterous in the management of the sabre, but his character is entirely destitute of enterprise. To strengthen his interest, he negotiated a marriage, in the year 1792, between his daughter and another powerful bey, which was celebrated with great pomp at Cairo. An elegant coach, drawn by two horses, and decorated with wreaths of artificial flowers, proceeded through the principal streets, with a beautiful slave from the harem, who acted as deputy to the bride, whose features were rather ordinary; the blinds of the carriage were, however, drawn up, and the fair lady sat* concealed till the pro-

* In general, at Cairo, the bride walks under a canopy, completely veiled, and supported by two females, to the residence of the bridegroom.



cession, attended by a few beys with their officers and Mamelukes, stopped at the house of the bridegroom, who received her in his arms, and ordered an exhibition of fire-works for the evening. Presents of shawls, caffetans, money, and other articles were then liberally distributed at the houses of the husband and the father; and the female singers found sufficient employment in the city, upon the joyous occasion.

One of these women, who had been singing in the Birket el Fil, or chief open place, not only during the day, but through part of the night, was mentioned to Ibrahim, the father of the bride, as having collected donations to a considerable amount. He accordingly sent for her, and demanded how many half sequins she had obtained by her vocal exertions. The woman readily replied, "about ten thousand." "Pay me eight thousand then," said the Bey, "and I will give you a note of credit on my secretary." The singer complied with the demand, but instead of receiving the note, was cruelly driven from the house, and shortly after lost her life through extreme sorrow and vexation. An anecdote, well adapted to mark the avaricious disposition of the beys; whose systematic rapacity could not be lulled by such a season of festivity. Ibrahim Bey is indeed described by our author, as rather imitating, in his conduct, the greediness of the vulture; than the daring flight of the eagle: his Mamelukes are estimated at one thousand.

Murad Bey, who, in the service of *Mahomed Bey Abu-dhahab*, defeated and took prisoner *Ali Bey the Great*, is a man of a replete habit of body, about forty-five years of age, of

an energetic character, and equally prodigal and rapacious. His Mamelukes, in 1796, amounted to one thousand seven hundred. His wife is the daughter of the celebrated Ali Bey, and the widow of his master. She is much respected by all her husband's cotemporaries, and whenever a bey is appointed over a government, she lectures him on his duties, and reminds him of the excellent conduct of her father.

Mohammed Bey Elfi, whose name implies that he was purchased for a thousand patackes, is next in power to Murad Bey, his former owner. He is a man of quick apprehension and impetuous action, about thirty-five years old; possessing eight hundred Mamelukes, and visibly increasing in grandeur and authority.

Ibrahim Bey el Uali, alluded to in the nuptial anecdote as the bridegroom, is a young man about the same age with Mohammed Bey Elfi; his character is firm and sedate; his Mamelukes about six hundred, and his interests inseparably attached to those of the elder Ibrahim, his father-in-law.

Aiúb Bey el Zoghier, or junior, is likewise a powerful ruler; between thirty and forty years of age; the most eminent in capacity among all the beys, and consulted by them upon all occasions. He possesses but few Mamelukes, yet his prudence and abilities ensure him respect, and the populace rarely accuse him of any extortion.

The women of Cairo are of a middling stature, and well formed. The upper ranks are tolerably fair, which, together with their obesity, ensures them the admiration of the Egyptian *illants*. They usually enter the connubial state at fourteen years of age, and are accounted

past their prime at twenty. The Coptic women are favoured by nature with a genteel form, dark animated eyes, and an interesting countenance.

It is a remarkable fact, that the children of Europeans, born in Egypt, seldom survive their second or third year. Mr. Browne is of opinion that it chiefly results from the injudicious fondness of their parents, who destroy their health by an improper warmth of place and clothing, while the children of the natives are suffered to run about with scarcely any covering, and constantly enjoy a vigorous constitution.

Having devoted part of the summer to the task of learning the Arabic language, and being provided with an interpreter and a menial, Mr. Browne commenced his journey towards Abyssinia, on the 10th of September, and after a pleasant passage of eight days over the Nile, he landed safely at the city of Assiút, which is at this time the most considerable place in Upper Egypt. The situation is in all respects delightful, and the manner in which the water is conducted round the town, is worthy of observation. A canal, dug in a parallel direction with the river, laves the foot of the adjacent mountains, and after surrounding Assiút and the neighbouring villages, it descends again into the Nile. The water, however, is only admitted at a certain period of the increase, when it is suffered to overflow the lands, and the city communicates with the river by an artificial road, that is raised above the common level, and leads to the point where the boats are laden and discharged.

With respect to those vessels commonly appropriated to the use of passengers, between Cairo and Assiút, our author observes that, exclusi-

of the motley company by which they are filled, they yield the most pleasurable mode of travelling that can possibly be imagined, as they are furnished with a simple awning of branches, as a protection against the immediate action of the sun, and the mariners chaunt responsive to the motion of their oars, while the calm and majestic Nile glides slowly forward, and the banks on either side are crowned with the luxuriant produce of the husbandman's toil. The surrounding scenery, adds our traveller, is in every sense alluring, and the vessel offers an apt emblem of smiling fortune in her most prosperous career.

The internal government of Assiút consists of the *cadi*, assisted by other civil officers, and five *cashefs*, who constantly reside there; it is the seat of a Coptic bishop, though the majority of the inhabitants are Mahometans. Its chief support is derived from the Soudan caravans. Large quantities of wheat and fine flax are cultivated in the neighbourhood, which are sent to Lower Egypt, in exchange for salt, and other articles. Indian goods are imported from Mecca, by way of Cossir; but the European articles of broad cloth, tin, &c. are seldom seen. In the mountain above the city are several spacious caverns, curiously adorned with hieroglyphics and other emblematic figures. In one of the caverns, which seem to have been sepulchral, as they contain fragments of jars, that formerly held the ibis, dogs, cats, and other animals, which were either regarded as sacred, or slain to attend their owners to the silent mansions of the dead; three chambers are hewn in the rock, which is of free stone, one sixty feet by thirty, another sixty by twenty-six; and a third twenty-six by twenty-five.

five. Farther up the mountain there are caverns still more extensive than these.

Female chastity is so severely guarded in this country, that immediate death ensues upon its violation; and the father, brother, or husband, who, from tenderness of disposition, might hesitate to inflict this punishment, would be shunned by his acquaintance, and driven from society. The number of inhabitants in Assiút is estimated, by Mr. Browne, at twenty-five thousand. Their provisions are cheaper than those of Cairo, and the senjiak, or bey of Said, divides his year of office between Girgi and this city.

Assiút has become very populous within a few years, through the excellent government of Solymán Bey, who has also adorned it with many trees and other improvements. It was formerly known to the Arabic writers by the name of Haut es Sultan, or the King's Fish Pond, though no one is at present able to determine from what circumstance such an appellation arose. The chief antiquities between this city and Cairo, are found at Shech Abade, which receives its name from the tomb of a Christian ecclesiastic; and at Ashmunein, in the former, are two Corinthian columns, richly adorned, each bearing a Greek inscription, and standing diagonally opposed to each other.

After passing about fourteen days at Assiút, Mr. Browne procured a boat of a moderate size, for the accommodation of himself and his companions, and reembarked on the 4th of October, *in quest of new discoveries.*

The ensuing evening was spent before the village of Mehala, that has been built within twenty years, by command of a certain Osman Bey

Bey. The materials are indeed rough, and the number of houses inconsiderable, but the four streets, of which it consists, are built in right lines, and are four times as wide as the generality of streets in such places.

The expence of building is extremely small to the villagers of Upper Egypt, as clay and unburned bricks may always be had for the trouble of collecting, or forming them; the case is exactly similar with regard to thatch; and the date tree, though of a perishable nature, affords the requisite timber. The rustic builders never waste their time in the preparation of useless decorations, but, in the considerable towns, as Ghenné, Assiút, Girgi, &c. the houses are generally constructed of superior materials, and are sometimes magnificent in their appearance.

Several large islands were remarked by our author in the course of the Nile, but as they were frequently changing place, on account of new depositions of mud, it was impossible to mark them with accuracy. On the eastern side, between Cairo and Assuan, the number of towns and villages amounted to near one hundred and sixty; and on the western bank, where there is a greater extent of cultivated lands, two hundred and twenty-eight were visible, exclusive of many that are situated within the limits of the arable land, and consequently cannot be distinguished by a passenger on the stream.

Having passed Monsalút, a city of considerable extent and population, Mr. Browne continued his navigation up the Nile till the 6th, *when he came within sight of Kaw, or Gaw es Sherki, the Antæopolis of antiquity, where are several columns, that formerly appertained to*
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curious temple. Many of the stones are from eighteen to twenty feet in length, and are richly covered with emblematical figures and hieroglyphics.

From hence he proceeded to Achmim, the ancient Chemmis, or Panopolis, now a pleasant village on the eastern side of the Nile. Some fragments of columns still remain at this place, and similar caverns to those of Assiût are found in the neighbouring mountain. A mummy had been recently taken from the principal chamber, as appeared from several remains of prepared cloth and human bones. The hieroglyphics are here painted in distemperature, as is usual, upon a smooth surface of free stone, and the ceilings of the chambers have been plaistered and coloured. From this circumstance it seems probable, that the ancient Egyptians held a custom, like many other oriental nations, of annual visits to the dead, and that these rooms were built for the accommodation of the relations on such occasions.

The neighbourhood of Achmim produces an abundance of sycamores, and the gardens are finely embellished with date and other trees.

These sycamores bear a small dry fig, of a yellowish colour, adhering to the trunk of the tree.

On the 11th of October, our author arrived at Girgi, which, though now declining, was formerly the capital of Upper Egypt. It has a spacious market-place, and an abundance of shops, and several large pieces of granite were *discovered*, about three feet thick, and nearly *two yards* in diameter, with a perforation of *twelve inches* square in the centre. They were
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supposed by Mr. Browne to be antique mill-stones.

Passing a populous town denominated Farshiút, and noted for the abode of many Christians, our traveller reached Dendera, the ancient Tentyra, on the 17th, when he was agreeably entertained with the sight of the noted temple, which is accounted the most perfect remain of Egyptian architecture. Its form is an oblong square, two hundred feet by one hundred and fifty. A flight of steps in the middle of the wall leads to a dark gallery, that passes through all the sides. Many of the columns retain their original position, and the painted hieroglyphics, in the pronaos and the gallery, are in excellent preservation. A cashef, supposing that treasures were concealed under this mouldering edifice, was employed at the time of our European's visit, in blowing up the walls.

Continuing his navigation on the Nile, by moonlight, which rendered his passage extremely delightful, Mr. Browne arrived the same night at Ghenné, the ancient Cænopolis, and from thence proceeded, on the 19th, to Kepht, or Coptis, where the ruins of its ancient buildings may fill a circumference of two miles. Several small granite columns are scattered over the ground, and part of a bridge is visible at a small distance, but it is impossible to ascertain the era of its erection, nor is there any thing sufficiently striking in its formation, to interest the curiosity of a spectator.

Quitting Kepht, our author proceeded, on the following day, to the town of Kous, the Apollinopolis Parva: it is situated about a mile from the eastern bank of the Nile, and is tolerably
populous.

populous. Towards the north-east, Mr. Browne observed an ancient gate, embellished with a cornice and several emblematic figures.

On the 21st he visited Nakade, where he found a Catholic convent; and the next day arrived at Akfor, the ancient Thebes, where he understood, the inhabitants had recently rebelled against the authority of the Mamelukes, and that the Troglodytes of the caverns, in the theban district, still remained tumultuous, and frequently assaulted the troops of the beys, by firing upon them from their recesses, and when pursued, they would elude the vengeance of their enemies, by a precipitate flight to the mountains.

The massy and magnificent ruins of ancient Thebes, the Egyptian capital, the city of Jupiter, the city with a hundred gates, diffused on both sides of the Nile, are sufficient to fill the breast of every intelligent spectator with awe and admiration, while Homer's animated description runs into the memory; "Egyptian Thebes, in whose palaces vast wealth is stored; from each of whose hundred gates, issue two hundred warriors, with their horses and chariots."

These venerable ruins, which are probably the most ancient in the universe, extend for about nine miles along the Nile, their breadth eastward and westward, towards the mountains, equivalent to seven miles and a half, and the river is about nine hundred feet broad; the circumference of the ancient city may be, therefore, computed at twenty-seven miles.

In sailing up the Nile, the first village within the precincts that strikes the eye of the passenger is Kourna, on the west, where the natives chiefly reside in caverns. Next is the village Akhad

hadjadj, and a small district, denominated Karnak, both on the eastern side; and towards the south-west, Medinet Abu may be considered as the boundary of the ruins.

The most considerable remains are situated on the eastern bank of the Nile, and are thus briefly described by our author:

The great temple is an oblong, square building, of great extent, with a colonnade at each extremity: it stands in the district of Karnak, and its stones and massy columns are entirely covered with hieroglyphics. The temple of Abu Hadjadj is the next in importance, and a variety of ruins appears around, curiously marked with remains of sphinxes and other figures.

On the western side of the Nile are two colossal figures, of calcareous stone, that were apparently designed to represent a man and a woman. Remains of a stupendous temple are likewise observed, with excavated caverns in the rock; and the magnificent edifice, called the Palace of Memnon, is well deserving the examination of the curious. Many of the columns are nearly forty feet high, and upwards of nine in diameter; the walls and columns are decorated with a variety of hieroglyphics. This ruin stands at Kourna.

Behind the palace is a passage, that leads up the mountain, to the sepulchral caverns, that were constructed for the reception of the ancient kings. They are all hewn in the free-stone rock, and are apparently formed upon one general plan, though differing in the formation of their respective parts. The entrance is by a passage, of considerable length, that opens into a chamber from which it branches out in two directions.

the one leading to the large chamber, with a sarcophagus of red granite in the midst; and the other, discovering several painted cells or recesses, where, among a variety of figures and hieroglyphics, Mr. Browne particularly noticed the two harpers, described by Bruce; the paintings were in general in good preservation.

On our author's landing, with his Greek attendant, at Kourna, he was surprised to see no other inhabitants than two or three women, who were standing at the mouth of one of their dens, and as he passed in quest of the Shech el Belad, to request a guide, one of them asked him, in Arabic, whether he was not afraid of crocodiles; he replied in the negative; when she emphatically said, "*We* are crocodiles," and proceeded to describe her own people, as a ferocious clan of thieves and murderers. They are indeed a dangerous people, essentially different in person to the other Egyptians, and regarded with horror by the people of Cairo, who informed our author, that if he attempted to land among them, he would require a guard of twenty men. This account, however, proved to be exaggerated, as two guides, assigned him by the Shech el Belad, were sufficient to protect him from insult and molestation.

At the village of Beirat is a native spring, and some others are found in the neighbourhood, the water of which is perfectly sweet, though different from that of the river.

Their favourite weapons are spears, of twelve or fourteen feet in length, which are sudden and deadly instruments in their hands.

Though some European authors are of opinion, that Thebes was never surrounded by a wall
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Mr. Brown found sufficient vestiges to establish a contrary belief. In the precincts of the great temple, at Akfór, is a small chamber, lined either with porphyry or red granite, from the roof of which may be seen an insulated mass, toward the south, that has apparently been a gate. Some other imperfect remains are visible, with a telescope, under the same circumstances, in the directions west and north. From the situation of these ruins, precisely opposed to each other, at the three cardinal points, it seems extremely probable, that these were three of the gates belonging to the ancient city.

After spending three days in the vicinity of Akfór, Mr. Browne resumed his voyage up the Nile, on the 26th of October, and on the following day arrived at Isna, the residence of the fugitive beys, who are extremely poor, and dejected, on account of their long exclusion from the government. The town is tolerably extensive, and a similar temple to those of Thebes, was discovered by our author, who observes, that it was in good preservation, but inferior in size to the others. The inhabitants have a ridiculous superstition among them, concerning crocodiles, similar to that entertained in the West Indies. They assert that these creatures have a king, whose residence is in the vicinity of Isna, and who has ears, but no tail; they likewise affirm, that he is perfectly harmless, and some of them are bold enough to say they have seen him.

After visiting a village, called Hillal, where some reliques of an ancient town were discovered, comprising two small dilapidated temples, a mutilated statue, and part of a thick wall, of unburned brick; our author proceeded to Edft
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where he inspected a portico and the ruins of a temple, and on the 30th passed the Gebel el Silfili, or Chained Mountain, from which, in ancient times, a chain was passed across the Nile. The rock, which is of free stone, is embellished with several sculptures.

From hence Mr. Browne sailed by Kúm Ombú, literally the Ruins of Ombos; saw the temple, described by Norden, and on the following day, arrived at Assuán, the ancient Syené, where he found but few remains of antiquity, and those seemed rather of Roman than Egyptian fabric. The modern town is in a ruinous state, and its population is very small. Its chief support arises from a small impost upon dates, passing from Ibrim to Cairo.

At a small distance from Assuán, are still visible the tombs of the Mamelukes, who fled from Selim, on his invasion of Egypt. Nearly opposite, is an isle, containing some remains of antiquity, among which, a statue of granite, appears, bearing a lituus in each hand. Many of the present inhabitants have the negro formation, hair, and countenance. At the distance of three hours walk from Assuán, is the cataract, in Ar Shelal, or, more properly, rapides, being only an easy descent of the river, among several obstructing rocks of granite: the noise of its fall is scarcely audible.

In the vicinity of this cataract, Mr. Browne observed some black rocks, but the distance prevented his ascertaining the nature of their substance. It is well known, that many of the engraved stones and ancient statues, in Egypt, are of basalt; but as no quarries of this kind have been discovered, either in Egypt, or the other
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districts of Africa, it is most probable they were drawn thither from Abyssinia.

After waiting three days at Assuán, in hopes of pursuing his route up the Nile, Mr. Browne had the mortification to find that a war had broken out between the Mamelukes of Upper Egypt and the Cashef of Ibrim, which totally stopped the caravans, and precluded the possibility of his farther progress; he was therefore necessitated to abandon his favourite hope, of visiting Abyssinia by this route, and to think of returning. He accordingly quitted Assuán on the 4th of November, and passing rapidly down the river, he arrived in three days at Ghenné.

On his return to this place, he resolved to gratify his curiosity, by an excursion to Cossir, notwithstanding the Bedouins infested the road, and his undertaking was rendered extremely dangerous, by a violent quarrel, that had recently taken place between the natives of Cossir and the mariners of an English vessel, the latter of whom had rashly fired on the town, and killed several individuals.

Having agreed with an Arab, for three dromedaries and an attendant, he accordingly left Ghenné, early in the morning, on the 8th of November, and arrived, by the most northern route, at the place of destination, on the 11th, about sun rise. The principal inhabitants complimented him on his arrival; but all seemed to examine him with a suspicious eye, which might probably result from his inability to converse fluently in Arabic. An old thereff in particular, who had acquired an intuitive discrimination of character, by his frequent visits to Mecca, Constantinople, Bagdad, and other parts of

the Turkish empire, perplexed him with a variety of questions, and would indisputably have discovered him, had not his servant luckily joined the conversation, and waved the subject.

The dress and language of the inhabitants of Cossir seem to approximate to those of the eastern shore of the Arabian Gulf, rather than to those of the Egyptians. They are armed with a lance, and a long, crooked knife, called the *jembia*. Their number is very small, though greatly augmented by strangers, who are continually passing and repassing through their town. They are provided with excellent fish, but, otherwise, provisions are very scarce, as there is no cultivable land in the neighbourhood; even their butter is brought from Arabia, and the only good water, that can be procured, is purchased of the Bedouins, who bring it from Terfowi, which is at the distance of three hours.

The commerce in coffee is considerable; pepper and other spices are brought there, free of duty, and a few Abyssinian slaves are landed there, in their passage from Jidda to Cairo. The houses are commonly built of clay, and the town is altogether uninteresting to a traveller, as it does not exhibit a single remain of antiquity.

On the 13th of November, Mr. Browne quitted Cossir, about half past seven in the morning, and proceeded along the straight road, to the village of Bîr Ambar, where he obtained some repose, in the house of a civil peasant, and then continued his journey to Ghenné, which he safely reached in about three hours.

During his return, our author remarked, that the road, which was almost level throughout, had

had been cut out with immense labour, in rough and lofty rocks of porphyry, that still environed it on each side, and exhibited a grand and terrific appearance. In the route he took in going, he observed a succession of small structures, which, from their formation and the marks of fire within them, seemed to have been originally used as signals. A chain of rocks, consisting of red granite, seemed to extend itself in a northerly and southerly direction; large rocks of porphyry, both red and green, were likewise visible; and the route might altogether be said to unfold a treasure of marbles, that were sufficient to astonish the beholder, and to demonstrate that, if the quarries are again wrought, modern architecture may equal that of the best ages of Greece or Rome, in richness and durability of ornament.

The coloquintida is found in great abundance, near Birambar and Ghenné, but its value is so trifling at Cairo, that the natives scarcely think it worth the trouble of gathering. At Ghenné is a manufactory of earthen bottles and water jugs, which are prettily formed, of a fine, blue clay, convenient in size, and possessing the power of filtration in a peculiar degree; large jars are also made in a similar manner, and are highly estimated at Cairo, where the inhabitants purchase them with avidity, in preference to the manufacture of any other place.

Having procured a small boat for his conveyance, and two dervises, for companions in his journey, Mr. Browne reembarked, on the second day of his return, and, after stopping at all the principal towns, without any new occurrence, he arrived on the 21st at the city of Assiút, where he

was afflicted with a severe fever, in consequence of his exposure to the sharp air, in the road to Cossir, and on the Nile; by taking a powerful dose of James's powder, however, it was happily removed, and on the 30th he had regained sufficient strength to set sail for Cairo.

On his arrival at Benesuef, he landed, and expressed a wish to proceed from thence to Feinme; but finding that a conveyance could not be procured without great difficulty, he relinquished the idea, and resumed his former course, till the 8th of December, when he again arrived at Grand-Caire.

Previous to his visit at Ghenné, two Crooks, who were going to seek their fortune, came to Kous, where some words unfortunately arose between them, and they were advised to repair to the cashef, as to a proper arbitrator of their dispute; they accordingly presented themselves before this officer, who was noted for his violence of character, and, who on finding that their disagreement arose on the subject of money, terminated the hopes and fears of both parties, by a barbarous order for their immediate execution.

The report of this termination was considerably aggravated, in reaching Cairo, and even the persons of the victims were changed, as it was there asserted, that our author was one of the persons, so inhumanly massacred, and that the cashef's master was among the number of those who had been deceived. The aga, in whose department Kous was situated, wrote an account of the event, with a suitable comment, and an offer of any reasonable reparation to the Austrian consul, at Cairo, who was about to forward it to the British consul, at Alexan-
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When Mr. Browne arrived in time to confirm the general opinion. The murder of so ill-fated Greeks was said to remain unexplained.

Intending to visit Feiúm, a city, distant about six miles to the south-west, Mr. Browne quit Siwa, on the 28th, and proceeded to the west of Moknan, where he procured a recomatory letter from the shech, to an officer, who resided farther on toward the south, and might prove useful to him, on his introduction to Feiúm; he then continued his journey through a fine grove of date trees, that were fertilized by means of several cisterns, supplied with water, during the increase of the Nile; a natural opening in the chain, that constitutes the western boundary of Egypt; and after arriving at Tamieh, which is pleasantly intersected by a canal, and surrounded by cheerful scenes of cultivation.

A little town is celebrated for an excellent manufacture of mats, though its situation is so remote, as frequently to overwhelm the natives in the deepest distress, on account of their property, which is forcibly seized by the wandering Bedouins, and carried away without any possibility of resistance. The night preceding our traveller's departure, a robbery had been committed to a considerable amount, and musquets were repeatedly fired, to keep off a small party of the banditti, who still continued in the neighbourhood. Leaving Tamieh, our author passed another day at Senuris, the seat of an hospitable shech Bedouins, and on the 1st of January, 1793, arrived at Feiúm.

This city, which is unwall'd, but tolerably populous, is situated on the principal canal, leading from the Nile to the lake, and is surrounded with cultivated grounds, and a charming assemblage of gardens, formerly celebrated for a profusion of roses, propagated by continued layers, and producing an excellent rose water, that was purchased, with avidity, by the natives of various countries; but the cultivation is now evidently on the decline. The adjacent fields are richly clothed with wheat and other grain: the water is excellent, and provisions tolerably plentiful. The city contains several mosques and okals, or public warehouses; the houses are partly built of unburned brick and partly of stone, the inhabitants are chiefly Mahometans, and the government is vested in a cashef.

At a small distance, towards the north, are the ruins of an ancient town, called Medinet Faris, or City of the Persians, by the Arabs. Some broken statues and busts were here offered to sale, some vitrifications were also observed, that seemed to indicate an Arab glass work, and some jars, resembling those formerly used to contain the dead ibis. Mr. Browne is of opinion that this place is the ancient Arsinoe.

Having devoted three days to the satisfaction of his curiosity, and necessary refreshment at Feiûm, our author proceeded towards the lake, now called Birket el Kerun, but which is, in reality, the Moeris of Strabo and Ptolemy. Its length is computed at between thirty and forty miles, and its breadth at the widest part six miles, *the utmost extent of its circuit must consequently be reckoned at ninety miles.* On the south and north-east is a rocky ridge, in every appear-
anc

ance primeval; in the extremity, nearest Feiúm, are some isles, where there is a flat, sandy shore; and, in short, the whole appearance of the place is strongly adapted to point out the absurdity of those who have imagined this lake to be the product of human art. The water is brackish, and the fish rather indifferent, yet several fishermen are constantly busied on the lake, in miserable boats, and contrive to procure a subsistence.

The western extremity is under the jurisdiction of the Muggrebine Arabs, who suffer no person to travel thither, unless he is under their own immediate protection. This information frustrated the expectations of our author, who was anxious to visit some ruins, that were said to exist there. The Arab shech of Abu Kiffé, affirmed that it would require four days to make the circuit of the lake; that there were no villages in its vicinage, and that nothing could be procured, but from the Muggrebines already mentioned. It is reported that human bones are sometimes found on the eastern extremity.

Pursuing a south-easterly direction from Feiúm, Mr. Browne observed two small pyramids, of unburned brick, and a passage through the mountain at Hawára; he then passed the town of Illahon, where the inhabitants are chiefly husbandmen. He then returned to Bédís, after noticing the channel of a large canal, denominated the Bahrbila ma; and a long, deep cut, now called Bathen, but supposed to be the artificial Moeris of Herodotus and Diodorus Siculus.

Next day he passed the pyramids of Dashúr, *five of which appear successively, exclusive of those of Sakarra.* That of Medún is built of *soft free-stone, in a singular form, but has apparently*

parently been very elegant. The top is now extremely broad, and would probably be difficult of ascent, but our author imagines that its summit was originally completed by another square, that has been removed. The northern side has been materially injured by the attempts of various travellers to gain a view of the interior, which is, however, entirely solid. The base of this pyramid has been erroneously described, as a natural rock; but Mr. Browne, on removing the surrounding sand, and examining the corners, clearly discerned the cement and the respective stones to the very foundation.

Of the pyramids of Dashûr, two of which are large and two small, the fourth is the most southerly, and is built in the form of a cone, terminating in an obtuse triangle. The faces of these pyramids are all directed to the four cardinal points of the compass: they have not the least appearance of any casing, nor do the stones point to the centre, like those of Jizé. At a small distance is a pyramid of unburned brick, and a small one of stone, not completed,

Ten of these monuments, of a superior size, exist at Sakarra; besides a great number of smaller ones, that have been frequently plundered, for the purpose of building at Jizé, Cairo, &c. and are scarcely distinguishable from the surrounding sand-hills.

The two largest are at the distance of two hours and a half from Jizé, and are well known to all who have travelled in quest of Egyptian curiosities. In that which has been opened, Mr. Browne found a great chamber, lined with granite, that was thirty-four feet five inches in length, and seventeen feet two inches in breadth, containing

containing a sarcophagus of the same material as the lining of the chamber: besides these, were observed a small chamber, eighteen feet nine inches in length, and seventeen feet one inch in breadth; also an antichamber; a main gallery; a descending passage of one hundred and five feet one inch; and a passage to the inferior chamber, that measured one hundred and nine feet one inch. The general material in these edifices is a soft, white, free stone, replete with shells, and the rock, on which they stand, is of the same nature.

Our author also visited the pleasant site of the ancient Memphis, on the left bank of the Nile, between the river and the mountains, and about two hours distant, towards the south of Cairo. The land is now richly clothed with corn, and embellished with fine date trees. No remains of antiquity are visible, except a few pieces of sculptured stone, and some heaps of rubbish. The spot was formerly surrounded with a canal, and seems altogether a more eligible situation than that of Cairo. Its extent might be marked by the ground, where remains are sometimes dug up, and which is overgrown with a sort of thistle, that seems to flourish peculiarly among ruins. It is most conveniently visited from the Coptic monastery of Abu Nemrús.

Of the several capitals of Egypt, in successive ages, Thebes or Diospolis seems to lay claim to the greatest antiquity. Next was Memphis, a venerable and ancient city. Babylon, which according to all accounts, was founded by the Persians, seems to have been only the capital of a part retained by that people, after the subjugation of Egypt to Cambyſes. Alexandria suc-
ceeded

ceeded Memphis, and remained the chief city, till Grand Cairo was founded by the Saracens.

On the 1st of March, 1793, Mr. Browne quitted Cairo, in company with a large caravan, consisting of a hundred and fifty persons, and two hundred camels, in order to proceed to Suez. The road may be described as nearly one uniform plain, in general hard and rocky, though occasionally varied with patches of deep sand. As the camels were permitted to browse without restraint upon the verdure, that was lightly sprinkled over the desert, the journey was but slowly conducted. The mornings and evenings were rather cold, though the hours of noon were commonly sultry. On the third day a shower of rain descended, in consequence of the south-west wind having subsided, and continued falling for four hours and a quarter. Though some Europeans have erroneously supposed, that no rain falls in Egypt, our author observes, that showery weather will sometimes prevail for a week together at Alexandria; and that he has sometimes seen rain at Cairo. In Upper Egypt showers are extremely rare, and only one fell while he continued in that country.

After a tedious progress of five days, the caravan arrived at Suez, which our author describes as a small town, built chiefly of unburned brick, except a few of the mosques, which are of stone. Its population comprises Mahometans and a few Greeks. Its chief article of trade is coffee, and its only *apparent* fortification consists in some old cannon, that are in all probability unfit for service. The sea is extremely shallow near the town, yet there is a small yard, for ship-building where Mr. Browne observed two vessels, in
imper

imperfect state, besides four three-masted vessels at a small distance, with ten others of various descriptions, and several large boats without masts. The Arab method of ship-building, says Mr. Browne, is very singular. The natives are ignorant of the art of bending timber, and consequently none of them are crooked but what are formed so by nature. They are very slender, and where the upper and lower ribs unite, they pass by the side of each other. The largest of the ships in the neighbourhood of Suez, at the time of our author's visit, was intended for the Indian trade, and the rest were designed for traffic to Jidda.

Exclusive of oysters, and some other of the shell kind, Suez is but indifferently supplied with fish, that of the best kind seldom coming higher than Cossir. Meat is generally scarce; bread extremely bad; milk and butter purchased in small quantities of the Arabs; and water, bought by the skin, of the same people, at a considerable price.

A mount of rubbish exists in the vicinity of Suez, where the ruins of Arfinoe may yet be distinguished. The spot is now denominated Kolsûm, where some remains are visible of a stone aqueduct, that originally communicated with Bir Naba. Petroleum, which is esteemed as a cure for bruises, &c. is brought to Suez from a rock, on the African side of the gulf. In crossing this gulf, near the entrance of Suez, boats are commonly used at high water, but at other times it may be forded by either camels, horses, or men, with the greatest safety.

In the shallow parts of the adjacent sea, Mr. Browne discovered a species of weed, which be-
in

ing of a bright red colour, and a spongy quality, appeared in the sunshine exactly like coral. Though unable to learn its Arabic name, or the purpose to which it may be appropriated, our author is inclined to imagine, that it may have given the recent name to this sea, if it was found in great quantities at a former period. This was undoubtedly the Arabian Gulf of the ancients, whose Red Sea was the Indian Ocean, and the weed alluded to may probably be the *soph* of the Hebrews, from whence their name of the sea might have arisen. The shores are sprinkled with a beautiful variety of shells; as are also those of Maadie, in the neighbourhood of Aboukir.

At Suez, our author passed the ford on the 8th of March, and proceeded, at first along a barren coast, and then through some pleasant and fertile vales, embellished with a variety of shrubs and date trees, and bounded by mountains of red granite, till the 14th, when he arrived at Tur, where the Greek priests of a small convent pointed out a spot where a church is said to have been buried, and miraculous noises frequently heard; but on visiting the place, merely in expectation of some natural phenomenon, Mr. Browne affirms that he found nothing.

Quitting Tur on the 18th, he continued his route till the morning of the 22d, when he reached the monastery of Sinai, which is large, with a good garden, and a subterraneous passage. A small mosque is erected within the walls, for the convenience of the Arabs.

The mountain, now bearing the appellation of Sinai, is very lofty and abrupt; on the northern *side of it* our author observed some snow. The whole

whole is a remarkable rock, of red granite, diversified with patches of soil, that have been either brought thither by human industry, or washed down by the rain. These spots produce almond trees, figs, and vines, while innumerable rills of water gush from various apertures in the precipice, and meander pleasantly among the little gardens. Sinai, says Mr. Browne, has two summits, the one resembling Parnassus, the scene of inspiration; and the other, known by the name of St. Catharine; the latter is the highest, and may probably be the Sinai from whence Moses descended with the Decalogue.

After contemplating the beauties of this remarkable place, and observing from the mountain the eastern gulf of the Red Sea, our author returned to Suez, and from thence to Cairo, without any occurrence that was worthy of mention.

At the moment of Mr. Browne's return from Assuan to Assiut, the caravan of Jelabs from Dar Fur, called the Soudan Caravan, arrived at Elwak, when they affirmed, that at the expiration of two months they should return home. Their delay, however, was protracted during the residue of that winter, and it was not till March, 1793, that they quitted Cairo for the Upper Egypt.

The necessaries for their journey were collected but slowly, and our author employed his time, during their stay, in drawing intelligence from various quarters, relative to his passage, and such things as might be most prudently taken with him. The persons of whom he requested such information, gave him no intimation of that activity which so strongly marks the conduct of the

their countrymen towards a Christian. The late Sultan of Fur had indeed been justly famed for the mildness of his disposition, and the kindness of his behaviour towards persons of every description; but a stronger reason for the silence of the Furians might be this: A native of Soudan is always the most servile and obsequious creature of the human race, at Cairo, where he treats a Christian with nearly as much respect as one of the Mahometans; in his own country, however, he repays with interest the contempt that has been shown him by the inhabitants of Egypt.

Having embarked on the Nile, Mr. Browne set out from Bulak on the 21st of April, and on the eighth day arrived at Assiut, after a passage that was rendered unpleasant by contrary winds. His first care was then to provide camels for his route, as they were exceedingly scarce. At length, however, he purchased five for about the sum of 65l. sterling; made up his provision of food for the journey; and, after a delay of fifty days, departed in company with the caravan which had now assembled. The weather was extremely sultry, and consequently unfavourable to travelling; but the Soudan merchants, notwithstanding their indolent disposition, esteem the variations of climate unworthy of their attention, when profit is concerned, and long habit has familiarized them with heat in such a manner, that what would completely overpower the inhabitant of a northern nation, is no serious motive with them for the remission of their labour.

The route taken by this caravan was by Shet and Selimé, from whence they crossed the Desert;

a south-westerly direction. On the 25th of May, they encamped on a mountain above As-it, till the 28th, when they proceeded by short stages to Elwah.

The Jelabs usually pay at the rate of about a stakke for each camel, to the Muggrebines, for their protection, or rather for forbearing to plunder them. This tribute was, however, refused by our author, who alleged that he was only a ranger, employed on business to the Sultan, and consequently not of the number of merchants who regularly traded to Soudan. This refusal occasioned a slight dispute, but the Arabs finally relinquished their demand.

As the camels were loaded heavily, the Jelabs travelled slowly in detached parties, till the 31st of the month, when they came to a high, rocky mountain, called Gebel Rumlie, which seems to constitute the wall of Egypt and the eastern boundary of the Low Desert, where are situated the Oases. It consists of a coarse tufa; its road seems in many places to have been opened by it, yet it is so rugged, and difficult of descent, that the travellers were a full hour in reaching the bottom, while the camels suffered greatly beneath their heavy burdens, and were frequently in the most imminent danger of falling.

The view, from the summit of this rock, lost itself in a spacious valley, consisting chiefly of rocks and sand, but occasionally diversified with small clumps of date trees, and other marks of vegetation.

Having gained the plain, it was judged expedient to unload the camels, and allow them some rest, till the morning; when four hours and a half were employed in passing from the foot of the

the mountain to Ainé Dazé, the first place that affords a supply of water, and the northern extremity of the Great Oasis.

From hence they proceeded for about eight hours, over a waste country, to Charjé, when the leader of the caravan thought fit to notify his approach to the town by beat of drums, a discharge of small arms, shouting, and other tokens of joy. At Charjé there is a gindi, or officer, and another at Beiris, both belonging to Ibrahim Bey el Kebir, to whom those villages appertain; and to them is entrusted the care of all business that relates to the caravans during their stay there.

On the 7th of June, the travellers resumed their journey, and after a march of six hours over another dreary space, they reached the village Bulak, where the houses are only small pieces of ground inclosed with a clay wall, and usually destitute of any covering. Bulak, however, affords a good supply of water, and its inhabitants contrive to procure a subsistence by the sale of their dates.

Having devoted one day to rest and refreshment at this place, the travellers proceeded through Beiris and Mughefs, till the morning of the 20th, when they arrived at Sheb, whose name implies that it produces a considerable quantity of native alum. By digging to the depth of a few feet in the sand, a tolerable supply of water is here obtained. The general surface of the ground abounds with a reddish stone, and in many places argillaceous earth is visible. This part is frequently infested with an itinerant tribe of Arabs, who come hither from the neighbourhood of the Nile.

On the 23d, our author came to Selimé, which is a small verdant spot, pleasantly situated at the foot of a ridge of rocks, that are of no great height or extent. It affords the most excellent water of any place on the route, but yields no vegetable fit for the support of either man or beast, though the eye is agreeably relieved from the dry sterility of the circumjacent surface. A small building, consisting of loose stones, has been erected at Selimé, most probably by some of the wandering tribes, who cross the Desert in all directions; but the Jelabs affirm, that it was originally the residence of an Amazonian princess, named Selimé, who, armed with a battle-axe, bow, and quiver, and attended by a large number of followers, inspired all the inhabitants of Nubia with equal terror and veneration.

From hence the caravan continued their march to Leghea, where water is scarce, and unpalatable when found. The camels were now extremely weak and jaded, and the merchants were at a loss respecting the road, though several of them had traversed this desert ten or twelve times.

Quitting Leghea on the 2d of July, after suffering great inconvenience from a southerly wind, that raised the dust in clouds, and almost stopped the powers of respiration, they resumed their journey, and on the 8th arrived at the Bir el Malha, or Salt Spring, the vicinity of which is remarkable for the production of white solid natron, that becomes hot on immersion in water, and discharges a great portion of its air. The Jelabs usually carry it in small quantities to Egypt, where it fetches a considerable price, and is appropriated to the purpose of making snuff.

At the well, our author met with some natives of Zeghawa, who are stationed there occasionally to supply the caravans with provisions, and other necessaries, at a price that is sufficiently exorbitant to remunerate themselves for the fatigue of a ten days journey. Their articles of traffic were now peculiarly grateful to the travellers, as the original stock of provision had proved insufficient, and many camels had perished on the road.

The neighbourhood of the Bir el Malba is sometimes infested by a wandering tribe, called Cubba Beech, who rapidly traverse the Desert on the swiftest dromedaries, and gain their subsistence from the plunder of the defenceless. They are not, however, provided with fire-arms, and therefore seldom venture to attack so numerous a body as that which composed the caravan.

After a stay of four days, our author and his companions travelled with little interruption till the 20th, when they formed an encampment on a spot called Medway; but as this place was destitute of water, they were compelled to purchase that needful article of the Mabrea Arabs, whom they met, with wicker baskets of so close a texture, that they are used for the conveyance of either milk, water, or any other liquid.

On the 23d, they came to the Wadi Mafrúk, or the first springs within the limits of Fúr, but they were so much annoyed by a species of white ant, that built its covered way to every thing within the tents, and by the increasing rains, which now began to inundate the valley, that they were compelled to abandon their camp, and seek a shelter in the adjacent village of Sweini, where Mr. Browne resided for several days in the house

house of a principal merchant, who was established in the country.

A melek, or governor, under the sultan of Dar Fúr, generally resides at Sweini, and there all strangers and merchants of every description are obliged to wait till the pleasure of the sovereign is announced with respect to their disposal. As our author, however, entered the country under considerable exceptions from the general rule of traders, and might rather be called, according to the Arabic custom, "The king's stranger," he expected to receive permission immediately to proceed to the royal residence; but as several misrepresentations concerning him had reached the sultan, and consequently manacled the hands of the melek, with whom he frequently remonstrated, he found himself detained without the least probability of knowing the reason, and therefore resolved to copy the example of the Jelabs, and wait the event with patience.

The house he was in consisted of a number of separate apartments, built of clay, and covered with a slanting thatched roof, but unprovided with doors. All who could find place in it, were permitted by the hospitable owner to lodge themselves without distinction; and here the Jelabs continued for about ten days, when they all received permission from the sultan to proceed to their respective houses, on paying the customary duties.

As the circumstances attending our traveller were peculiar, and as many serious disadvantages could not have been well avoided, or foreseen, he has given the following relation to the public, under the idea of rendering an acceptable service to other travellers.

“ Previous to my departure from Cairo, I was
 “ apprized that all commerce in Dar Fúr was
 “ conducted by means of simple exchange, I
 “ therefore sought for a person who might trans-
 “ act this business for me with some degree of
 “ probity, as my entire ignorance of the articles
 “ fit for barter, and the application of my mind
 “ to other objects, were sufficient reasons to de-
 “ ter me from acting as a trader myself.

“ A person was accordingly recommended to
 “ me at Cairo, in whom I frequently observed
 “ keenness, but no fraud, and in general that
 “ absolute devotion to the will of his superior,
 “ for which his countrymen are at least *externally*
 “ remarkable.

“ Shortly after our departure, however, his ob-
 “ sequious behaviour was transformed into in-
 “ sult and disobedience, and on our arrival at
 “ Sweini, he contrived to send one of his affo-
 “ ciates to the sultan, in order to keep me from
 “ his presence, and to detain me under pretence
 “ of my entering the country with some iniqui-
 “ tous purpose. At the same time, the villain
 “ himself, who formed this diabolical plan, took
 “ advantage of my momentary absence, to take
 “ from one of my boxes, that had been broken
 “ upon the road, a quantity of red coral, by the
 “ help of which commodity he expected to make
 “ his way with the great.”

In consequence of this villanous procedure in
 Mr. Browne's servant, a person arrived at his
 lodging with a specious letter, impressed with the
sultan's seal, ordering that no person should pre-
sume to detain or molest him till he arrived at
the house of Ibrahim el Wohaihi, in Cobbe,
where he was to continue till further orders should

be issued for his admittance at court. Though our author was at that time ignorant of the plot, he thought it extremely singular that an order should be sent for the protection of his person, while it obliged him to confine himself to one particular spot. He was, however, unprovided even with the means of remonstrance, and therefore knew that submission was unavoidable.

His situation was now truly pitiable, while he languished in the most cruel suspense, without any apparent sign of a remedy. Absent from his friends, separated from his Egyptian acquaintance, and regarded with horror by the mistaken devotees of the country, who viewed *him* as an infidel, and his *complexion* as either a sign of disease, a mark of divine indignation, or the most unequivocal proof of inferiority of species. Such ideas had closed every heart against him, averted the wonted hospitality of the natives, and enflamed their personal pride and intolerant zeal.

Thus unsettled in his own mind, and persecuted by an ignorant race, our author confesses that he began to grow impatient, and on the fourteenth day after his arrival, the agitation of his spirits communicated its pernicious influence to his state of health, and brought on a violent fever, attended with extreme pain in the head, and a temporary delirium. This was succeeded by a dysentery, that continued for two days, and rendered him unable to assist himself. Fortunately, however, he had the prudence to reflect, that of all the aliments there to be procured, scarcely any could be found but were pernicious, and he therefore confined himself, after the first
attack

attack, to the use of bark and water, which he drank in large quantities.

At the expiration of a month, the symptoms began to diminish, and Mr. Browne again requested leave to visit the sultan, but the desired permission only served to increase his sufferings. The rainy season was indeed at an end, but the air still continued insalubrious, which, together with extreme abstinence, fatigue, and anxiety, served to renew the malady, and to incapacitate him during several months from all personal exertion. At length, however, the increasing heat of summer began to meliorate the air, and to produce a regular transpiration, when he began to revive, and soon gained some degree of strength.

On his arrival at El Fasher, he was introduced to the melek Missellim, one of the principal ministers. Though ignorant and illiterate in the extreme, he had a peculiar quickness of apprehension, and gaiety of temper had rendered him acceptable at court, where, our author observes, he appeared rather as a buffoon than a minister of state.

He received the European with a rude stare of stupid astonishment, that was immediately followed by a smile of mingled scorn and aversion. He was seated on a mat, under an awning of cotton cloth, with some other of the royal attendants, who entered into conversation on the person, character, and intentions of the stranger, partly in their vernacular idiom and partly in Arabic. A wooden bowl of polenta, and another of dried meat, were then served up to them, of which our author refused to partake, as his indisposition had totally deprived him of appetite.

When

When they had satisfied themselves with their repast, they asked a number of ridiculous questions concerning Europe, many of which were prudently waved by our author, and to others he gave such replies as he judged the most satisfactory. He then introduced the subject of greatest importance to himself, and informed the melek that he had travelled from a far distant country to Cairo, where he had heard the king, Abd el Rachmán, much celebrated for his magnificence, power, justice, and hospitality; that in consequence of this, he had undertaken to visit Dar Fúr, from motives of curiosity, and to form a collection of medicinal herbs, supposing his person would have been unmolested, his property secure, and that permission would have been granted for him to have gone wherever he might have thought proper; but as he had been unhappily deceived in all his expectations, he now ventured to ask redress for his grievances, and protection for the future. He then requested permission to go to Sennaar, in order to proceed to Habbesh; entreated that three or four persons might be sent with him, as an escort to the frontiers of Kordofán; and concluded by observing, that he had a small present for the sultan, consisting of such articles as the nature of his circumstances permitted him to bring.

To this address the melek answered, "Merchant, you are welcome to the Dar. The sultan is kind to strangers, and has ordered a sack of wheat and four sheep to be sent to your lodging. At present it is impossible for you to pass through Kordofán, as the king has a great army there; but when the country shall be in subjection, he will grant your request. When you are
admitted

admitted to an audience, you will only have to explain the nature of your grievances, and they will be immediately redressed."

The hour of prayer was now announced, when the officers commenced their religious ablutions, and Mr. Browne retired to his tent.

After this visit, our author suffered so severe a relapse, as to be unable to perform the common offices of life, and even to suppose that it was drawing to an end. Whenever any symptom of amendment appeared, he sent word to the melek, that he earnestly wished to be introduced to the sultan, and then to be dismissed as soon as possible. No reply was vouchsafed to this message; but the following day the melek visited the invalid, with several attendants, and desired to see the merchandise that was brought from Cairo. With respect to part of the articles, as splendid habiliments, designed for the king, &c. Mr. Browne readily satisfied his curiosity; but he insisted on examining the contents of a small chest, which contained a number of articles, that were either useful to our author, or intended for presents at Sennaar, or wherever else he might be able to penetrate. A positive refusal was therefore given upon this point; but, on the officer's attempting to break open the box, Ali Hamad, the treacherous factor, with his accustomed villany, produced the key, and submitted the articles in question to the melek's examination. Several of the smallest immediately disappeared; some English pistols were reserved, to be taken by the sultan at the valuation of his own servants; and the telescopes, books, and wearing apparel of our author were graciously left him, evidently

evidently because they were regarded as things of no value.

Next day the proposed valuation was made, notwithstanding the warmest remonstrances on the part of our traveller, when a few articles were estimated at their real value, but most of them were stated far below it. A pair of double barrelled pistols, silver mounted, which had cost twenty guineas in London, was valued at one slave, or fifteen piastres; when Mr. Browne exclaimed, that if their object was plunder, and matters of bargain and sale were conducted in their country by force instead of consent, it would be much better to seize the whole, without the ridiculous form of a purchase. No person then vouchsafed him an answer, but on the morrow he received two camels, as a compensation for his ungenerous usage.

Having been exposed during fifteen days to great variations of temperature, frequently irritated by ill treatment, and so totally disregarded, that he could scarcely obtain sufficient water to save him from perishing with extreme thirst, our author judged it expedient to return to Cobbé, where the shelter of a clay house, and some degree of privacy, might possibly tend to the restoration of his health and spirits. He accordingly hired two Arabs, and, with the camels that had been given him, and the few articles that remained of his property, he arrived on the third day at the house where he had received the sultan's letter.

During his residence at Cobbé, he attempted to cultivate the acquaintance of the most considerable inhabitants, and as they became habituated to him, his situation became less distressing.

By constantly studying the dialect of the country, which differs greatly from the vernacular idiom of Egypt, he frequently obtained much amusement from listening to the legal arguments of the people; their arbitration of particular disputes; and their mode of conducting a bargain, which sometimes lasted for several hours. The sultry hours of noon were usually devoted to the society of the graver men, who used to sit and converse under a shed, erected for the purpose; and though their discourse was seldom enlivened by witty remarks, or rendered instructive by profundity of observation, it was always carried on with good humour, and served to banish many unpleasant reflections from the mind of the stranger.

The following summer, 1794, our traveller resolved to go and reside near the sultan, as he might then have an opportunity of imploring redress for his grievances, and at the same time press his request, for permission to pursue his journey. He therefore quitted his lodging, and proceeded to El Fasheer, where he obtained a temporary accommodation in the house of a native, named Musa, whom our author describes as the most worthy and amiable character that he ever met with among the Mahometans. Though no motive whatever would have induced him to eat out of the same plate with a Caffre, (the name here given to an European), he was strictly observant of the rites of hospitality, and supplied his lodger with an ample provision of food every day from his kitchen. He frequently observed, *that it was a precept of his faith to detest the person of an unbeliever, but that he was neither obliged to injure such a one, nor should he think himself excusable in attempting it.*

As the melek Misellim was now employed by his sovereign in the south, Mr. Browne was placed beneath the protection of the melek Ibrahim, a man of about sixty years of age, tall of stature, but not athletic, and rather characterized by the roughness than the expression of his features. His hair is entirely grey; the motions of his body ungraceful; and his manners totally unpolished. His understanding, however, and sagacity, seem well adapted to his station, which is one of the greatest in the empire. In matters of faith, he is an intolerant enthusiast, but in private concerns, or any thing that does not affect the prevailing superstition, his judgment is cool, and generally guided by sound prudence. Avarice is his predominant passion; and notwithstanding his immense revenue, he possesses so little of Arabian generosity, that a person is accounted unfortunate who goes supperless to his evening council. Having never seen an European, he regarded our author in much the same light as the dwarfish Goitres of the Alps are contemplated by the inhabitants of France or England. From his discourse it appeared, that he regarded the Franks as a small tribe, cut off from the rest of mankind by their singularity of complexion and dreadful impiety.

On our author's introduction to this singular character, he was welcomed by the melek, assured of redress for his past grievances, and promised protection for the future; but it seems this language was a *mere compliment*, in return for a present that was brought by Mr. Browne; as during three months he was never to be seen, unless our traveller obtruded himself on his notice, and even then he received no mark of com-

mon-civility, much less the promised compensation.

Anxious to obtain an audience of the sultan, our author regularly attended his levees, which are from six in the morning till ten, but could rarely obtain admittance, and when he did, he experienced such pointed disregard, that he had no opportunity of speaking. He then returned to his shed, hungry, thirsty, fatigued, and disappointed, and afterwards visited the markets, which are usually held from four o'clock in the afternoon till sun-set. Occasionally he strolled out with his gun, in quest of amusement, after the commencement of the rainy season, but scarcely ever observed any thing worthy of notice in the animal or vegetable kingdoms.

On Mr. Browne's first audience, he observes, he was too much indisposed to be capable of minute observation. The sultan was seated at the door of his tent, and requested to see the stranger's watch, and a copy of Erpenius's Grammar, which had been mentioned to him by one of his servants; but after casting his eyes on each, he immediately returned them, thanked our author for his present, and rose to retire.

During the next summer, Mr. Browne obtained admission to him, when he was holding a divan in the outer court. He was then mounted on a white mule, apparelled with a scarlet benish, a white muslin turban, and yellow boots. His saddle was of crimson velvet; his sword, which was adorned with a hilt of massy gold, was held in his right hand, and a canopy of muslin was supported over his head. The vast concourse of people then assembled rendered it impossible for our author to make himself be heard.

On another occasion, he contrived to gain admittance to the interior court, when the sultan, who was hearing a private cause, was seated on a kind of chair, covered with Turkey carpet. His head was encircled by a red silk turban; his hands engaged with a chaplet of red coral, and his knees supporting the imperial sword. As our author was now so near him, as to obtain a perfect idea of his countenance, he fixed his eyes upon him for that purpose, but the sovereign was evidently discomposed at such an observation, and retired abruptly the moment the cause was concluded.

At another visit, Mr. Browne found him standing in the inner court, with a long staff, tipped with silver, in his right hand, and the sword of state in his left. The melek Ibrahim presented him with a small piece of silk and cotton, of the manufacture of Damascus, in the name of the European, when he returned answer, "May the blessing of God be on him;" and instantly retired.

Anxious to make another effort to promote his design, our author presented himself before the monarch at a great public audience, when he found him seated on his throne, that was spread with small Turkey carpets, under a lofty canopy, composed of various stuffs of Syrian and Indian fabric, loosely suspended from a light frame of wood. At some distance were seated the meleks, on the right and left, and behind them a line of guards, whose dress consisted chiefly of a cotton shirt, of the native manufacture. They were all furnished with spears and targets, and each wore on his head a cap, ornamented with a small plate of copper, and a black ostr

ostrich feather. Behind the sovereign were several eunuchs, in splendid habiliments; and at his right hand stood a kind of hired encomiast, who continued to vociferate during the whole ceremony, "See the buffalo! the offspring of a buffalo; a bull of bulls; the elephant of unrivalled strength; the mighty sultan Abd el Rachmán el Rashid! May God prolong thy life, O master! May God assist thy councils, and crown thy arms with conquest!"

This audience proved, however, equally vexatious to our traveller with the preceding ones, as he was again compelled to withdraw without effecting his design.

The sultan here alluded to, is a man rather under the middle size, about fifty-five years of age, with expressive features, black complexion, animated eyes, and a short, full beard. When he appears in public, he is usually attended by a number of guards, and several slaves, the latter of whom are employed to bear a canopy over his head. When he passes, his subjects bow profoundly to the earth, or kneel with the deepest humility; even the meleks approach the throne on their hands and knees; but this servile compliment is not expected from foreigners.

With respect to the topography of Dar Fúr, our author has given the following account, with some interesting observations on its inhabitants, customs, revenues, &c.

The town of Cobbé, which is the principal residence of the merchants, and placed almost in a direct line from the northern to the southern extremity of the country, is situated in 14 deg. 11 min. lat. and 28 deg. 8 min. lon. It is more than two miles long, but extremely narrow, and

the houses are erected at considerable distances, which, together with a large portion of ground attached to each dwelling, as an inclosure, must of necessity occasion a great waste. It is, however, rendered extremely pleasant by a great variety of trees, which appear in every quarter, and yield a charming shelter from the beams of the sun. The inhabitants are supplied with water from wells of a small depth, that are either dug within the inclosure of the houses, or in the bed of a torrent, which surrounds the town in the rainy season. Their mode of digging is, however, unskilful, and they are frequently driven to great extremities, when the quantity of water proves inadequate to the public consumption. Cobbé was only furnished with one small mosque, simply built of clay, at Mr. Browne's arrival, but, previous to his return, a more spacious building was undertaken, with the leave and assistance of the sultan. The inclosed area was about sixty-four feet square, and the walls were designed to be three feet thick.

South-east of the town is a large open space, where a market is held twice in the week, for the sale of provisions, and all other commodities which the country produces, or which can be conveniently procured from other parts. In this market, from ten to fifteen oxen, and from forty to sixty sheep, are ordinarily slaughtered for the consumption of the adjacent villages. Slaves are likewise brought thither, but are commonly sold privately, though the practice is loudly reprobated, as facilitating the sale of those who *have been stolen from other places.*

The other principal towns of the empire are, Swcini, Kourma, Cubcabia, Ril, Cours, Shob, Gidi

Gidid, and Gelle. Sweini is situated almost north of Cobbé, at the distance of two day's diligent travelling. Kourma, a small town, west by south, at the distance of five hours. Cubcabia, a place of greater note, nearly due west, at the distance of two days and a half, over a rocky and mountainous road. Cours, north by west, at five hours and a half, travelling from Cobbé. Ril is distant about three days farther, in a south south-easterly direction, and may be computed at sixty miles; Shoba is two days and a half distant from Cobbé; Gidid about one day and a half in a south-easterly direction; and Gelle is situated at a small distance from Cubcabia.

Sweini derives its chief importance from being the general resort of Egyptian merchants. Provisions are extremely plentiful, and during the residence of the Jelabs, a daily market is held. The poorer class of inhabitants are either Arabs or natives of the province Zeghawa.

At Kourma, the population is very small, exclusive of the merchants, who, together with their dependants, occupy the chief part of the town. A market is held twice in the week, for various sorts of provisions, as at Cobbé.

Cubicabia may be properly denominated the key of the western roads, as Sweini is of the northern. The town is large and its inhabitants numerous, comprising Furians, Arabs, natives of Bergoo, and strangers of various descriptions. Their market is celebrated for an excellent supply of leather and strong cotton cloths, that are usually worn by the people of both sexes.

Cours is divided between a number of traders from the river, and a sect called Fukara, who affect an uncommon share of piety, and are peculiar

culiarly remarked for their intolerant zeal, and brutality to strangers.

Ril is the key of the south and eastern roads, inhabited partly by Furians and partly by foreign merchants. It is well supplied with water, cattle, bread, butter, milk, and vegetables, and altogether seems admirably suited for the imperial residence, though the reigning sultan has abandoned a house that was built by one of his royal predecessors. A melek is commonly stationed here, with a body of troops, as a guard to the frontier, and to keep the wandering Arabs, who abound in the vicinage, in proper subjection.

Shoba is said to be well supplied with water, and has some chalk pits in the neighbourhood; these, however, were nearly exhausted, by command of the sultan Feraub, who fixed upon this town as a temporary dwelling, and accordingly erected a palace. Some of the inhabitants are Jelabs, but the majority are Furians.

Gidid is situated south-east of Cobbé, in the road to Ril. It is chiefly occupied by ecclesiastics, who will scarcely allow a traveller sufficient water to allay his thirst, though this town is noted for an excellent supply of that useful element. Gidid is likewise the residence of some oriental merchants.

Gelle is under the galling tyranny of a priest, whose intrigues and hypocrisy have gained an entire ascendancy over his master, and whose insatiate avarice has plundered the townsmen, till they have scarcely a mat to repose on, or sufficient clothes to defend them from the changes of the weather. Consequently Gelle is esteemed the *least flourishing town in the empire.*

The population of Cobbé, we have already observed, consists of merchants; these are mostly employed in trading to Egypt, some of them are natives of that country, but the generality come from the river.

Egyptians chiefly from Said, a few Tunifines, and natives of Tripoli, come and go with the caravans, only remaining long enough to dispose of their merchandise; others have married in Dar Fúr, and are now recognised as subject to the Sultan, and the remainder consists of foreigners, from Dongola, Makas, Sennaar and Kordofan. In this town there are two or three places appropriated to the tuition of youth. The children of the indigent are usually taught gratuitously by some of the Fukara, but persons in easy circumstances are expected to remunerate the teacher for his trouble and attention. Three persons usually lecture in the Koran, and two others in, what they term, theology.

The government of Dar Fúr is the monarchical, as being expressly favoured by the dispensation of Mahomet. It is true, the Sultan cannot act in opposition to the letter of the Koran, but his conduct frequently oversteps the boundary of the laws, and, as he is neither controlled nor assisted by any council, his power may justly be styled despotic. He publicly speaks of the country and its productions, as his *personal* property; and of the inhabitants as little else than his absolute slaves. If his decisions are at any time marked by flagrant injustice, the ecclesiastics venture to express their sentiments with some boldness, but the effects of their opposition are always trivial; nor does the monarch fear any thing, but a spirit of general disaffection among

his troops, who are able to drag him from his envied splendor, and to invest whomever they think proper with the insignia of royalty. His power in the provinces is delegated to officers, who are equally arbitrary in their respective districts.

On the death of the sultan, the title descends properly to his eldest son, and in default of male heirs, to his brother; but this rule of succession is frequently infringed, upon various pretences; as the minority of the son, or the pretended usurpation of the late sovereign, till at length, the pretensions of those, who have any rightful claim to the throne, are to be decided by war, and consequently become the prize of the strongest party.

“ It was in this manner,” says Mr. Browne, “ that the sultan, Abd el Rachman, gained possession of the imperial dignity. A preceding monarch, named Bokar, had three sons, viz. Teraub, el Chalife, and Abd el Rachman; the eldest of these obtained the government, on the demise of his father, and reigned thirty-two lunar years, when he bequeathed the empire to his sons. The second brother, however, pretended that none of them was old enough to govern the people, and accordingly seized upon the throne, but his reign proved extremely short, as a discontented party commenced hostilities against him, in concert with the natives of Kordofan; and, with Abd el Rachman at their head, advanced to Dar Fúr, where the two brothers came to an engagement, and the Chalife perished, beneath a multitude of wounds, with one of his sons, who gallantly fought in defence of his father. This victory, however, proved entirely useless to the rightful heirs, as one of them was sacrificed to the ambi-
ti

tion of the victor, and the others merely obtained a wretched subsistence from the parsimonious alms of their usurping relative.

On his first accession to the imperial dignity, Abd el Rachman deemed it prudent to mark his conduct, by some degree of moderation and self-denial, assuring his subjects, that his thoughts were chiefly engrossed by the contemplation of a future state, and that the splendor of the empire was perfectly indifferent in his eyes. He even refused to see the treasures of his deceased brother, and when he entered the interior of the palace, with an unparalleled dissimulation, he drew the folds of his turban over his eyes, and implored his Creator to shield him from the effects of surrounding temptations. At length, supposing himself sufficiently established to defy his enemies, and to expect an implicit obedience from his subjects, who never attempted to question his authority, he dropped the specious mask of sanctity, and appeared in his true character, of avarice and ambition; since that period, he has been known to stand for whole days, in stupid admiration of his gold, slaves, camels, and costly apparel. The severity of his regulations, with respect to the military, had nearly alienated the affection of that powerful class, at the time of our author's visit, and the people were so universally disgusted with his practices, that his honours were apparently hastening to an end.

The population of so wide a country as Dar Fúr must necessarily be attended with great difficulty, to any one who should attempt to compute it with precision. Mr. Browne supposes *it cannot exceed two hundred thousand, as the army in Kordofán, consisting of about two thou-*
san

sand men, is spoken of as a very large one; and in Cobbé, which is one of the most populous towns, the inhabitants of both sexes, including slaves, cannot be reckoned at much more than six thousand. There are, indeed, a considerable number of villages in the empire, but the largest of these is only occupied by a few hundred individuals.

The people of Dar Fúr consist of traders from the river; natives of the western country, who are either merchants or Fukara; Arabs of different tribes, who generally lead an itinerant kind of life, on the frontiers, where they breed oxen, horses, and camels; the people of Bego, or Dageou, who formerly ruled the country, but are now obedient to the Sultan and the Zeghawa, whose dialect is materially different from that of the Furians, and who boast of a chief, that once led their ancestors to battle, accompanied by a thousand horsemen. Kordofán and several smaller kingdoms are now subject to the crown of Fur, but their history is so imperfect, that nothing material could be discovered respecting them.

Agriculture does not seem wholly to be neglected by the Sultan, though probably the following practice may be rather a blind compliance with ancient custom, than the effect of individual public spirit. It is, however, indisputably laudable in itself, and forms a striking contrast to many other of his regulations. At the commencement of the rainy season, the natives assemble for the purpose of sowing their corn, and while they are employed in turning up the soil and depositing the seed, the king, attended by his *meleks* and a train of followers, enters the fields, and makes several holes in the ground, with his own hand. This custom, which is simi-

lar to that of the Egyptian monarchs, recited by Herodotus, is said to prevail in Bornou, and other countries, in this part of Africa. Mr. Browne seems to imagine it a part of the Mahometan precepts, transmitted to posterity. When the corn is sufficiently ripened to admit of harvest, a number of slaves and women are employed in breaking off the ears, depositing them in baskets, and carrying them from the field, while the straw is permitted to stand, till it is either removed for thatch, or applied to some other useful purpose. The grain is then threshed, in an awkward manner, dried in the sun, and treasured up in a cavity in the earth, the bottom and sides of which are covered with chaff, to exclude the vermin. In this manner they keep their maize in tolerable preservation. When they design to use it for food, it is ground to flour, boiled in the form of a polenta, and eaten with milk, or a favourite sauce of pounded meat and onions.

Their cakes, of the same material, called fragments, or sections, are used as a substitute for bread; and, if dexterously prepared, our author affirms, they are not unpalatable: they are also eaten with the above-mentioned sauce, and sometimes with milk, or even water.

The houses are generally built of clay, with a light roof, that serves to shelter the inmates from the inconvenience of an ardent sun, or a sudden shower. The edifices of the more opulent are plaistered, and coloured with red, white, and black. The apartments are of three kinds, one of which, called the donga, is a square of twenty feet by twelve, covered with a few light beams, some coarse mats, a quantity of camels dung, and a smooth coating of clay; the door consists of a
single

single plank, hewn out with the axe, and is secured by a padlock, as forming the repository of all their property. The Kournak is rather larger than the donga, open in front, and thatched with the straw of the maize, this is accounted much pleasanter in summer than the more confined buildings, and is therefore appropriated to repose and the reception of company. The other apartment, called the fukteia, is of the same kind as the kournak, but of a circular form, and from fifteen to twenty feet in diameter; this is designed exclusively for the accommodation of the women. The height of these buildings depends entirely on the will of the owner; they are, however, in general about seven feet, except the donga, which is twelve or fifteen, the floor of each is covered with clean sand, which is changed as often as occasion requires. A large and commodious house, fitted to the use of the most wealthy merchants, contains a double suite of these apartments, and is sometimes furnished with a rubbuka, or additional shed, where a company may sit, and converse in the open air. The interior fence of the house is generally of clay; the exterior universally a thick hedge of dried, thorny branches, which secures the cattle and precludes the possibility of the slaves escaping; but which, never taking root, is gloomy and ungrateful to the eye of a spectator. Such of the villagers' houses as rise above the appellation of huts, are built in the form of the fukteia, but their substance is only straw, or some other material, equally coarse and insecure.

In their persons, the natives of Dar Fúr are by no means remarkable for cleanliness, as in place of perfect and salutary ablutions, they rub

their flesh with a preparation of butter and sap-
naceous paste, which is certainly efficacious in the
removal of accidental sores, and the effect of a
constant transpiration. The female slaves are ex-
tremely dexterous in the application of it, and to
undergo the operation is one of the refinements
of African sensuality. Though the Furians, as
calling themselves the disciples of Mahomet, are
attached to every superstitious formality in their
devotions, their hair is seldom combed, or their
bodies completely washed. It is true, they are
strangers to the use of soap, and their country is
entirely destitute of baths. Their intervals of
toil and repose are governed wholly by inclina-
tion or convenience, without any established rule.
Their labours are frequently renewed, beneath
the scorching heat of the meridian sun, and their
nocturnal slumbers are commonly disturbed, ei-
ther by a dread of robbers, or by the musquitoes,
and other noxious insects, that abound in their
climate.

Their disposition seems more cheerful than
that of the Egyptians, and that gravity, which
is inspired by the precepts of their prophet, seems
but ill adapted to their inclinations. With their
fermented liquor, called buza, they are frequent-
ly inebriated, and have sometimes committed
such excesses in their convivial moments, that all
the property of a village has been forfeited to
the king, and the inhabitants punished for their
misconduct, by an exposure to the most severe
poverty. In the year 1795, the sultan publish-
ed an edict, wherein he forbade the use of that
liquor, under pain of death; yet, such was the
attachment of the people to their wonted bever-
age, that they frequently indulged themselves in
drinking

drinking, from sun rise till sun set, during which time Mr. Browne supposes each man to have swallowed near two gallons of buza. Fortunately for the natives, it has a diuretic and diaphoretic tendency, which precludes any danger from such unreasonable libations.

Dancing is practised by both sexes, in Dar Fur, and their fondness for this amusement is so great, that even the slaves will dance, in their fetters, to the music of a little drum. Each tribe seems to have its appropriate dance, which is distinguished by a peculiar name, as that of Fúr is called *Secundari*, that of Bukkara, Bendala, &c. some are grave, others lascivious, but generally consisting of violent bodily exertions, rather than of elegant attitudes or graceful motions.

The vices of cheating, lying, and thieving, with all others, of a similar nature, are almost universal to these people, with whom the most trifling property cannot be trusted out of the owner's sight. In matters of traffic, the parent exults in deceiving the son, and the son triumphs in overreaching his father; while, in their ordinary conversation, both God and their prophet are lightly invoked, to sanction the most palpable falsehoods.

The natives are universally polygamists, and usually take both free women and slaves, without any other limitation than that of their own inclinations, though the precepts of the Koran imply, that they shall only keep four free women, and as many slaves as they can conveniently maintain. The sultan has upwards of a hundred *of the former class*, and many of his meleks have *twenty or thirty*.

The character, treatment, and situation, of women are essentially different from those which mark the manners of other parts in Africa, to those which are established in Europe.

In contradistinction to the Egyptian women those of Soudan, on the arrival of a stranger, either remain in their seats, or only retire to a small distance, where they pass and repass about their ordinary business, within sight of the men.

In Egypt, a veil is the invariable guardian of or pretended modesty; but in Dar Fúr, no woman attempts to conceal her face, except she be the wife of some great personage. The middle and lower classes are contented with a slight covering, of a cotton cloth, wrapped round the waist, and another exactly similar, in size, shape, quality, thrown carelessly over the shoulders.

Some of the most laborious offices are here assigned to the females, who prepare the soil, the corn, assist in the harvest, reduce it to flour, and, finally, convert it into bread. They likewise prepare their husband's meals, wash his clothes, draw water, cleanse the apartment, and patiently endure the fatigues of a long pedestrian journey; while their husbands, mounted, idly, on an ass. At home, however, the voice of the woman has its full weight, as her concurrence is indispensibly necessary in every economical arrangement; and, notwithstanding her corporeal exertions in the day, her resolution of real, or supposed injuries, is generally sufficiently strong, to furnish matter for querulous upbraiding or pointed sarcasms.

Whoever unites himself in the matrimonial band with the daughter of a king, or powerful *melek*, may indeed gratify his vanity, but

never expect to find any solid advantage from their union, as she is the absolute moderatrix of his family, and his authority is soon reduced to a cypher. Of his real, or reputed offspring, he has no disposal, either with regard to their situation, government, or instruction. The princess, who has vouchsafed to honour him with her hand, claims, in return, an unlimited right over all his possessions, and her most unreasonable caprice must either be treated with the greatest indulgence, or her displeasure is soon succeeded by the more dreadful vengeance of the incensed monarch.

The troops of Dar Fúr are, by no means, celebrated for their skill, perseverance, or intrepidity; but, on the contrary, the people usually rely on the Arabs, who follow them to the field, and who may be properly denominated the sultan's tributaries. They are indeed capable, with other savages, of enduring extreme hunger and thirst; but, even in this particular, they have no superiority over their neighbours. They retain an inveterate animosity against the natives of Kordofán, who are, in their turn, equally implacable against the Furians. Our author is of opinion, that this unvaried animosity results from a jealousy of trade, as by their relative position Kordofán is considered as the most practicable communication between Fur and Mecca, and the caravans are unable to proceed from Suakem to Fur, without first obtaining permission of the governors in Kordofán.

Current coin is never seen in Soudan, except at El Fasher, where certain tin rings are given in exchange for small articles; their value, however, is in some degree arbitrary, and their size

so various, that Mr. Browne observes, "twelve and sometimes one hundred of them are given, for a certain quantity Austrian dollars, and some other sil brought from Egypt, are appropriated coration of the ladies; their use in dyer, is by no means general.

As gold is not found within the lim empire, it is rarely seen in the market does appear, it is usually in the form each weighing about five penny w which state it is brought from Sennear

None but the Egyptians will receive búb, or other stamped money. The cles that pass current, are such as bel dress of the natives; as beads, amb cloths, kohbel and rea; besides which, sionally traffic with slaves, oxen, and c

Previous to the establishment of Isla Furians seem to have formed itineran which state are many of the surroundi at present. In their persons they disse Guinea negros. Their complexion is f part black, and their hair short and woo some of them are seen with it of the eight or ten inches, which they esteem lar mark of beauty. The Arabs, who is considerable, within the empire, re original features, colour, and languag dom intermarry with any but their o The slaves, who are brought from Ferl land of Idolaters, exactly resemble tl of Guinea, and have a language p themselves.

At El Fasher, and in most of the to Cobbé, which we have already descri

chief residence of foreign merchants, the vernacular idiom is commonly used, though the Arabic is generally understood. All judicial proceedings, held in the presence of the sultan, are conducted in both languages; being spoken in the one, and immediately translated into the other by a *tergímán*, or interpreter.

Next in rank to the officers of state are the *faquis*, or priests, some of whom have been educated at Cairo, but the generality of them in schools, in their own country. They are totally ignorant of every thing, but what relates immediately to the Koran. Their sect is that of the *Iman Malek*, whose tenets are held by most of the inhabitants of northern Africa, except the Egyptians.

The revenues of *Dar Fúr* arise from a duty on all merchandise, which in many instances amounts to a tenth; forfeitures, for misdemeanors, which are entirely at the disposal of the monarch, and rigorously demanded; annual presents from every inhabitant, according to his rank and fortune; occasional presents from merchants, petitioners, and others; one tenth of horses, oxen, sheep, or camels, exacted from the Arabs; an annual tribute of corn, from every village; and the entire produce of the western district, called *Gebel mawa*, which yields an abundance of wheat, wild honey, and numerous articles, that are appropriated to the sultan's table. The king is likewise the chief merchant in the empire, and must consequently receive a considerable advantage, from the quantities of his own merchandise, that are regularly carried in the caravans to Egypt, and are frequently bartered

by his own dependents against Egyptian articles, in the countries adjacent to Soudan.

Such are the facts, which our author either related from actual observation, or received from persons of the most unimpeachable veracity; but as every degree of intelligence, however small, might probably facilitate a farther progress in this part of Africa, or yield some satisfaction to the curious reader, as relating to regions hitherto imperfectly described, he has presented the public with the following miscellaneous remarks on Dar Fûr, and some of the adjacent countries.

At the ceremony of leathering the kettle-drum, the Furians are represented as practising many superstitious customs; among which, they are said to murder a young boy and girl, in the form of a sacrifice. Many idols are certainly worshipped by the women of the sultan's Harrem; and when the mountaineers are in want of rain, they offer a kind of sacrifice to an imaginary being, whom they describe as the deity of the mountains.

The people of Dageou, a country on the west, are said to have come from the vicinity of Tunis; to have conquered the country, now called Fur, and to have held it in their possession, till their power was exhausted, by frequent civil contentions, upon which the present race of kings succeeded, though from what origin our author could not possibly discover. It is said, that the people of Dageou had a custom of kindling a fire on the inauguration of their king, which was carefully kept up, till the hour of his death. At present the Furians spread the carpets of the several deceased sultans before a new prince; and from the

the one he chuses, they venture to predict, that his conduct will be similar to that of its former possessor.

In Kordofán, the people were governed by a king, named Abli Calik, whom they still regard with the greatest love and veneration, and who, during a period of fourteen years, has been always renowned for his justice and probity. The kings of Kordofan had been deputed by the Mecque of Sennaar, till after the death of the son of this celebrated prince, when it was reduced under the power of the Furians.

Asnou, a country beyond Bornou, to the westward, is reputed to produce so great an abundance of silver, that defensive armour, constructed of that metal, is frequently worn by the natives. The coats of mail are represented as extremely beautiful; and it is said that pieces are formed of the same material, for the protection of the heads and breasts of the warrior's horses.

Dar Kulla, among the southern countries, is a place of great resort, to the Jelabs of Bergoo and Fur, who trade thither with salt, copper, &c. in order to procure slaves. Twelve pounds of salt is computed equivalent to the value of a male slave, and fifteen as the price of a female; if copper be the medium, two rotals are reckoned equal to four of salt. A large sort of Venetian glass beads, called hoddur, are here held in great estimation, and of tin are fabricated rings and other personal ornaments. The natives are described as partly Negroes and partly of a copper colour; their language is nasal, yet simple in its construction, and easily attained; their devotion is idolatry, their persons cleanly, and their mercantile transactions marked with the most punctilious

punctilious honesty. In that part of the country known to the Jelabs, there is a sovereign; the rest is inhabited by a number of small tribes, who are ruled by their respective chiefs. They have some ferry-boats upon the river, that are impelled partly by poles and partly by a double oar. The nature of the soil and the abundant supply of water are so conducive to the growth of their trees, that many of them, when hollowed out, are large enough to form a canoe for the accommodation of ten persons.

Jelabs, who have visited Dar Bergoo, describe the natives of that country as a warlike people, who frequently make war, by sudden incursions, and spread ruin and devastation over a considerable space in short time. Their women are always left behind at these times, which renders their military operations more successful than those of the Furians, who follow an opposite practice. Some of the idolatrous nations, dependent on Bergoo, are said never to retreat from an engagement; the heads of their spears are heated in a fire, by the females, who march in the rear, and they likewise make use of poisoned arrows.

In a remote part of the Pagan country, called Gnum Gnum by the Arabs, the people are described as cannibals; and several slaves, brought from thence, have readily acknowledged, that they devour their prisoners of war. They also strip the skin from the hands and faces of their slaughtered enemies, and after some slight preparation, wear them as peculiar marks of triumph. Their spears or javelins are of iron, wrought by themselves, and poisoned in the most dreadful manner, by being heated to red-
ness

ess, and stuck in the trunk of a particular
 ce, which yields the most deadly juice for
 their purpose.

After waiting in expectation of some redress
 for his wrongs, a considerable time, at El Fash-
 ; our author was at length introduced by the
 Melek Ibrahim, to the sultan, who having heard
 the nature of his complaint, addressed himself in
 short, but energetic harangue, to Ali Hamad,
 the treacherous factor, and to Hossien, a person
 who had accused the European falsely. "One,"
 said he, turning to Ali, "calls himself wakil of
 the frank; whereas, if he were a shereef and a
 muslim, as he pretends, he must know, that the
 law of Mahomet permits not a muslim to be
 wakil to a Caffre; another calls himself his
 friend, yet both are agreed in depriving him of
 his property, and in usurping the authority of
 the laws; henceforth, therefore, I am his wakil,
 and will grant him my protection." All the
 parties were then commanded to retire to the
 house of Musa Wullad Jeffun, melek of the Je-
 z, whose appropriate jurisdiction extends to
 the concerns of all foreign merchants.

On his introduction to this man, who was de-
 scribed by all who knew him, as possessing a
 boundless ambition, together with the most con-
 summate dissimulation; Mr. Browne was agree-
 ably surprised, by the graceful dignity of his
 manners, and a more polished conversation, than
 he had yet experienced in the country. During
 three days, our traveller was honoured by sitting
 with him, and partaking of the provisions that
 adorned his table; with an abundant, if not a de-
 finite, supply; and, in consequence of this distin-
 guishing mark of favour, the behaviour of the
 towards me

townsmen began gradually to alter, and Mr. Browne was soon respected by the principal people of the place.

Having given a full and satisfactory account of the losses he had sustained, since his arrival at Dar Fur, our author received so contemptible a compensation by way of redress, that he pointedly observes, he was *insulted* with the mockery of justice, yet necessitated to thank his oppressors for that, which was merely rendered incomplete, by their corruption and malignity.

The first week of the month Rabi el Achir, was distinguished by a festival, called, "the lea-thering of the kettle-drum." During its continuance, which is usually eight or ten days, all the inhabitants, except absolute mendicants, are obliged to present their sovereign with some mark of respect, according to their rank, and the meleks accompany their congratulations with presents, of considerable value. In return for this involuntary liberality of the people, the sultan's kitchen is thrown open for the public; but so great a number of animals are slaughtered on the first day, that the greater part is obliged to be eaten in a corrupted state. This festival is also marked by a review of the troops, but as their equestrian exercises are nothing more than an awkward imitation of the Mamelukes, a particular description must of necessity prove uninteresting to the reader.

In the summer of 1794, five men were brought from some of the provinces to El Kasher, under an accusation of corresponding with the rebellious leader, in Kordofan. This charge was deemed sufficient by the sultan, to sanction their death, and he accordingly issued out his orders for their execution.

execution, without any form of trial, or farther investigation of the business, A little after noon they were led to the market-place, loaded with chains, and escorted by a few of the royal slaves, while several meleks were commanded to attend, that *they* might know what to expect, if they should ever prove remiss in their duty. Three of the prisoners were very young men, the youngest apparently seventeen years of age. The executioner gave them time to utter a short prayer, and then plunged a knife in the neck of the oldest, exactly in the same manner as they slaughter a sheep; he fell, and struggled for some time, when the others suffered in their turn. The two first had borne their fate with great resolution, but the three last were much agitated, and the face of the youngest was bedewed with tears. Scarcely had the spectators satiated themselves with a view of this horrid sacrifice, when the slaves of the executioner brought forward a small block, and cut off the feet of the victims with an axe, in order to obtain their fetters, and then left the bodies as they were, till private humanity afforded them a peaceful grave.

Towards the end of the year 1795, a body of troops was reviewed, previous to their marching to Kordofan, where near half the army had perished of the small-pox. Upon this occasion the spoils of Hasmem were ostentatiously exhibited, consisting of eighty slaves; five hundred oxen, and two hundred fine camels. The whole procession closed with eighty horses, and many articles of inferior value, borne by slaves, while the populace rent the air with exclamations of, "Long live the Sultan, may God render him victorious."

As during his residence at El Father and Cobbé, Mr. Browne had received many assurances, that the monarch intended to detain him in the country, he prudently threw out many hints, which reached the royal ear, and ultimately proved of the greatest advantage. He then drew up a petition to the sultan, in which he repeated the nature of his sufferings, and earnestly begged leave to proceed on his journey to Kordofán. To this request, however, no answer was given, and Mr. Browne, therefore, presented himself at court, in order to obtain some satisfaction. No answer was still given to that part of the petition which related to our author's progress; but the sultan, who had received the value of seven hundred and fifty piastres, in goods, from the European, condescended to give him twenty indifferent oxen, that were only worth a little more than one sixth of that sum. "The state of my purse," says our traveller, "would not permit me to refuse this paltry supply, and I bade adieu to El Father, as I hoped, for ever."

Having made suitable preparations for his journey into Egypt, he now joined the chabir, or leader of the caravan, who was encamped at Le Haimer, about three days journey from Cobbé, and who commenced his route on the sixth day of the second month after the Ramadan. The caravan then proceeded by Bir el Malah, Leghea, Selime Sheb, and Elwah. Their provisions were coarse, and in small quantity, which, together with heat and fatigue, afflicted our author with a diarrhœa. At Beiris they were met by a *cashef*, who welcomed the Jelabs with a display of fire-works, treated them with coffee, and presented to each of the chief merchants a benish

of coarse cloth, for which, however, he expected a slave in return, whose value was ten times as great as the present. On our author's arrival at Assiút, he was much debilitated, by the effect of his diarrhœa and an abstinence of four months from animal food; but after a repose of about three weeks, his disorder was considerably abated, and he was enabled to proceed to Cairo.

On the 2d of December, 1796, Mr. Browne departed from the Egyptian capital, and sailed down the Nile, in a small boat, towards Damietta. His little voyage afforded no remarkable incident, but he passed several considerable towns, among which he mentions Mansûra, as being remarkable for the defeat of St. Louis, as is preserved in memory by its appellation, which signifies, "The place of victory." During a stay of only a few hours, it was impossible to ascertain the extent of its population, &c. but our author observes, its situation is so well adapted for trade, that most of the inhabitants are in easy circumstances. The mosques amount to seven, and the government is vested in a cashef, who is deputed by Ibrahim Bey.

In the same route, about half way between Cairo and Mansûra, are situated Miet Ghrammer and Sifté, on opposite banks of the Nile. They are both towns of the second order, and abound with Mahometan inhabitants. The breadth of the river does not here exceed three hundred yards, but its depth is considerable. It may here be proper to observe, that the greatest breadth of the Nile, when free from inundation, may be estimated at rather more than one-third of a mile. *In the narrowest part, the distance between the banks*

banks may be one hundred yards; the depth, from three to twenty-four feet.

In the Delta* are several large towns, of which the chief is Mehallé el Kebir, the next in size and importance, are Semmeneid and Menúf.

On the 5th of the month, our traveller arrived at the noted port of Damietta, which presents a beautiful aspect, on the first approach from the south, as the town is built on a gentle bend of the river, somewhat in the form of a crescent; and is surrounded with a charming extent of cultivation, that reaches to the lake of Manzalé. The soil is almost unrivalled in point of excellence, and is richly clothed with an exuberant vegetation, rendered peculiarly delightful, by a profusion of orange and lemon trees, that diffuse their aromatic odours round the country, while the celebrated papyrus springs up, in verdant spikes, to hide the deformity of the adjacent ditches.

This plant was formerly produced in such abundance near Damietta, that sleeping mats were formed of it, and were transported to several parts of Lower Egypt. But since the ignorance and superiority of the Mamelukes have permitted the channel of the Nile to desert its proper bed, and consequently to give access to the sea water, the plants of papyrus, and all the other vegetables, have gradually drooped and expired,

* To form a general idea of the Delta, the reader may contemplate a vast plain, intersected by small channels, in all directions. The canal of Menúf is almost the only considerable stream by which, with the assistance of pumps, the interstices are watered and brought to the utmost fertility.

amid

midst the insalubrious effluvia of a marine marsh. Formerly the papyrus was known to grow to the height of nine feet; the stem was about an inch in diameter, and sufficiently strong to serve for the purpose of a walking stick.

Mulberry trees and plantains frequently embellish the gardens of Damietta. The tethymaris, or wart weed, abounds in the neighbourhood. Cammony is by no means uncommon; and lucerne grows, in various parts, with surprising luxuriance. The eastern side of the river, from Damietta to the northern extremity of the coast, consists entirely of sand hills, and the greatest part of the road is lined with reeds.

The town is constantly enlivened by trade, as it is the depôt between Egypt and Lybia, and the mart for all the productions of the Delta. Its European commerce is now very small, a few Venetian and Ragusan vessels sometimes bring cochineal and other commodities, and formerly there were several French merchants, but their misconduct was such, with regard to the ladies, that the natives insisted upon their expulsion.

Of ruins, there are two mounts, near the eastern extremity of the town; on the most northern of them is part of a strong brick wall, said to have been part of an ancient castle. From this elevation may be seen the places, called the Field of Blood, where the conflict between the Christians and Saracens is reported to have been so obstinate, that the earth and water were insanguined for a considerable time after the battle; and where St. Louis, according to the Arabs, was taken prisoner.

An ancient round edifice, styled the Tower of St. Louis, has been lately so much dilapidated

that no vestige now remains, but a piece of brick wall, which originally stood on the outside of the moat, and of which the mortar is equally hard with the brick. The residue of the materials was removed to the extremity of the shore, by order of Mohammed Bey Abu-dhabab, whose fear of the Russians induced him to erect a fort, at a great expence; which, being built on the sand, is now in a ruinous condition, and partly surrounded by the water.

Two mosques were observed in the town by our author, which he pronounces the only objects worthy of further remark. One of them is an ancient*, famous edifice, said to have been erected on the ruins of a Christian church. It is of considerable extent, and contains a number of marble columns, one of which is of porphyry and another of red granite. One, of yellow and white marble, is supposed by the superstitious natives, to have the virtue of curing the jaundice, and is frequently scraped by the poorer class, who actually drink the powder, as an infallible restorative. The other mosque is a rich foundation, reputed to maintain near six hundred indigent shechs, who are either paralytic or afflicted with blindness.

Of the population of Damietta, some idea may be formed, from the number of mosques, which are said to amount to fourteen. There is likewise a Greek convent, which is appropriated to the accommodation of strangers, as there is no caravansera in the place. A considerable manufactory is also established, for cotton and

* This mosque is now deserted, and in a great measure fallen to decay.

linen cloths, that are sold for the use of the bath and other domestic purposes.

The lake Manzale, already adverted to, is rather more than thirty miles in length, and is navigated by a number of small vessels, that are either employed in fishing or in transporting passengers to and from the islands. This lake abounds with a sort of mullet, called *cûri*, which is dried, and salted at Damietta, from whence it is sent, through Lower Egypt and Lybia, to Cyprus. It is eaten with avidity by the poorer class of people; and by the Christians, in their days of abstinence, though it affords an insipid and insalubrious meal. The desert islands, that diversify the appearance of the lake, are occasionally visited by great numbers of aquatic birds, which are ensnared in nets, and furnish a livelihood to many persons, who carry them to market. The water of this lake is brackish, but not strongly impregnated with salt. Where the most easterly branch of the Nile fell into it, are still some remains of the city of Tunis; but our author had no opportunity of gratifying himself and the public, by an examination of the spot.

Quitting Damietta, on the 19th of January, 1797, Mr. Browne embarked in a small trading vessel, bound to the coast of Lybia, and commanded by an Arab. The weather proving stormy, and the mariners being extremely unskilful, the voyage was rendered very dangerous, and part of the cargo, consisting of rice and raw hides, was of necessity thrown overboard, while another vessel, that sailed in company, was swallowed up in the merciless deep. At length, however, the *seamen discovered the mountain of Ghaza, and*
after

after a miserable passage of five days, our traveller landed at the town of Yaffé.

The situation of this town, which is neatly built of stone, is so very unequal, that the streets are paved in steps. It contains three small convents of Christians, viz. Armenian, Greek, and Roman Catholic; and a few Jews. The town is walled, and has three gates, two of which still remain, but one of the principal ones is shut up. It is provided with an excellent wharf, an object rather extraordinary in the Levant; but ships cannot possibly come up to it, nor is there any secure place of anchorage. The air was formerly deemed unhealthy, but has been lately purified by the draining of the adjacent marshes. The beautiful and extensive groves of orange and lemon trees, which formerly embellished the neighbourhood, have, however, been destroyed, in the sieges undertaken by Ali Bey and his successor, Mohammed Abu-dhabab, when the Mamelukes cut down these charming trees, for the purpose of fuel. The government is now mild, being vested in an officer, appointed by the port; and, notwithstanding the commerce is small, the population gradually increasing, may be computed at near seven thousand individuals. Water is scarce, being carried by the women, though there is a small river in the vicinage. One of the governors designed to remedy this inconvenience, but, previous to the execution of his laudable plan, he suffered an untimely death, by command of Jezzar Pasha, of Damascus.

Having procured two mules, for himself and his servant, and having obtained permission from the agent of the convent, to visit Jerusalem, Mr. Browne proceeded to Rama, distant about three
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hours, where he arrived safely, after viewing seven villages, in his way from Yaffé.

Rama is pleasantly situated, on a good soil; furnished with a spacious and well-built convent, of the Franciscan order, and rendered peculiarly interesting, by the proximity of some ancient groves of olive trees.

Next morning, our traveller resumed his journey, and proceeded over a rugged, barren, and mountainous country, till about sun-set, when he entered the gate of Jerusalem. His servant, having loitered behind, was stopped by some wandering Arabs, thrown from his mule, and robbed. As the weather was intensely cold, and snow began to fall, the prospect of the celebrated city was not then sufficiently interesting, to gratify the European's expectation. It is seated on an eminence, and its walls, which remain tolerably perfect, and are constructed of a reddish stone, form the chief object in the approach. The religious of Terra Santa are possessed of great power, and their manufacture of reliques, crucifixes, chaplets, &c. is in a most flourishing state; yet the church of the holy sepulchre is so shamefully neglected, that the beams, said to be cedar, are falling to decay, and the whole roof is so materially injured, that the snow descends into the midst of the church. The Armenians have a convent, that is exceedingly handsome, and sufficiently large, to yield accommodation for a thousand pilgrims. The Catholic convent has a large, subterraneous cistern, which receives the snow as it melts from the roof and other parts, and thus supplies the monks with water, for a considerable part of the year,

The Mount of Olives, on the east of the city, commands the best view of Jerusalem. In front is the chief mosque, said, by the Mahometans, to contain the body of Solomon. From the same mount may be seen, in clear weather, the Dead Sea, in a direction nearly south-east; the intervening region is extremely rocky.

The tombs of the kings are composed of hard rock, and embellished with Grecian sculpture. On the sarcophagi are numerous ornaments of foliage and flowers, and each apartment is secured with a heavy pannelled door, of stone. They are supposed to have been constructed by command of Herod and his successors, who swayed the sceptre of Judea; but they are now materially injured, by the attempts of various persons, to discover hidden treasures.

Bethlehem is situated at the distance of six miles, in a beautiful country, blest with a salubrious air and abundant fertility. The water is conveyed in a low aqueduct, which formerly passed to Jerusalem. The Fons Signatus is a charming spring, yielding a constant supply to three large cisterns, one of which is in tolerable preservation. At a small distance from these, a beautiful rivulet, called the Deliciæ Solomonis, laves the herbage of the valley, and fertilizes some fine gardens; while the circumjacent soil is richly clothed with an elegant assemblage of fig-trees, vines, and olives.

About the same distance, towards the Wilderness, stands the convent of St. John, in the midst of a picturesque and highly-romantic country, pleasantly spotted with olive trees and vineyards. The mode of agriculture is here extremely curious. As the country abounds in abrupt rising

ings and declivities, little walls are built, for the purpose of sustaining the soil, and forming narrow terraces. The earth is turned up with small ploughs, drawn by oxen, and it requires a dexterous driver to turn his plough in such a manner as to avoid damaging the walls. The cultivation is generally crowned with abundant success.

Of cattle, the breed is generally small; horses are very scarce; and asses, resembling those of Europe, are commonly used for travelling.

The population of Jerusalem may be estimated at near twenty thousand souls. The government is in the hands of an aga, who receives his authority from the pasha of Damascus; his troops, however, are so inconsiderable, that the whole of Palestine may be regarded as in the power of the Arabs. Arabic is the general language, except among the Greeks and Armenians. The Christian women, who abound in the city, are distinguished from the believers of the Koran, by white veils. The Mahometans, indeed, wear a similar article of dress, but always of another colour.

On the 2d of March, 1797, our author quitted Jerusalem, and after riding about three hours, arrived at Beneth, where he devoted the night to repose, and on the following day pursued his route to Naplosa, the capital of the district called Samaria.

This town is pleasantly situated between two hills, upon one of which is the castle. It has several mosques, and carries on a considerable trade with Damascus and the coast; there is also a cotton manufacture. The government is nominally vested in a person deputed from the pasha of Damascus, but in fact conducted by the principal inhabitants. The population is large, including

including many Jews of the Samaritan heresy; but the natives are very hostile to Christians, who have no establishment here. The adjacent country is agreeably diversified with hills and valleys, and is in general covered with vines and mulberry trees.

During the first part of his journey from Naplosa to Nazareth, Mr. Browne observes the road was rocky and mountainous, and he only discovered three villages in the space of as many hours; but the vales were literally filled with vines, fig-trees, and olives, and even the rocks were frequently shaded with a charming variety of vegetation. Having passed the mountains Ebal and Gerizim, he came to an extensive plain, of excellent land, from whence he discovered a small fortress, which repulsed Jezzar Pasha, who undertook to storm it with five thousand men and some pieces of cannon. It contains seven round towers, and has two gates. The Samaritan peasants are a hardy, warlike race, and are usually well supplied with arms.

Sebasté, or Samaria, is now a contemptible, deserted village. Ginea is a decent town, and Nazareth is a pleasant village, situated on a gentle declivity. The generality of the inhabitants are Christians, who have a respectable convent. At a small distance is Mount Tabor, from whence there is a charming prospect of the circumjacent country.

Quitting Nazareth, our traveller proceeded for about six hours, over a fertile tract of land, on which, however, but few villages appeared, to the city of Acré, which he describes as tolerably spacious; containing from fifteen to twenty thousand individuals; and having several public edifices.

fices. Its situation is on a promontory, near a small gulf, but it has no haven. In favourable weather, the shipping is anchored near the shore, but European vessels anchor opposite a small place, at the foot of Mount Carmel, called Haifa, where the water is generally smooth. The trade of Acré is pretty considerable. Broad cloth, tin, lead, and other articles, are imported from Europe, in exchange for cotton; and from Egypt there are large imports of rice. As the Egyptian soil is not suited to the growth of cotton, this article is a staple commodity of Lybia.

The whole appearance of the city has been recently changed by the improvements and decorations of Achmet Pasha, who has built an elegant mosque and baths, two markets, a palace, and reservoirs for water. There are likewise three khans, or places for the reception of goods, and of travellers; five or six mosques, an establishment of Franciscans, and a Greek and Armenian church. Part of a double fosse still remains, which formerly encircled the town, but is frequently dilapidated by the workmen, who are commanded to employ the materials in modern structures. The peculiar revenue of the Pasha arises from an impost on wine, grain, meat, fish, and other articles of consumption; the other resources flowing, as usual, from the taxation of lands, the capitation tax on Christians, and the customs. The pashalik of Damascus, however, produces the greatest advantages to Jezzar, who, by means of largesses at the Porte, contrived to add this to his former government. His military force was formerly estimated at twelve thousand, but at the time of our author's visit, it did not greatly exceed one-third of that number.

On the 2d of April, Mr. Browne left Acré, in order to pursue his journey to Scidé. The road runs near the sea-side, through a track, that is completely overrun with thorns and thistles. Some few remains of antiquity were discovered, but they were so scattered and defaced, that it was impossible to guess their original destination. The shore is abrupt, and accompanied with deep water; the villages thinly scattered over the face of the country, and the population very trifling.

After sleeping at the house of a sheeh, in a small village, our author passed the sublime and picturesque eminence, known by the name of the White Promontory. The road is here cut through the rock, which is of white, calcareous stone, covered with bushes on the right side, but on the left, presenting an abrupt precipice to the ocean. This road is ascribed, by the tradition of the natives, to Alexander the Great.

The next object worthy of remark, is the Leontis, an inconsiderable stream, and easily fordable, at the period of our traveller's journey; but in the wet season it swells to a rapid torrent, as is usually the case with most of the rivers that descend from the mountains of Lybia to the sea. Proceeding across four small streams, running over their beds of pure gravel, and the dry courses of some rivulets, Mr. Browne arrived at Tyre, perfectly enchanted with the bright verdure and elegant scenery of the adjacent country.

The once famous and magnificent city of Tyre is now dwindled away into a small assemblage of miserable huts, situated on the northern extremity of the isle, and affording a residence to a few poor fishermen, who seemed totally unconscious of the classic ground they trod. The isthmus

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which unites it with the continent, is about six furlongs in length; the isle itself is of an irregular form, and does not exceed half a mile at the broadest part. The circumference of the ancient city could not, therefore, exceed twelve furlongs. The isle is now entirely destitute of vegetation, nor were any fragments of antiquity discovered, except three mutilated columns of granite. Southward of the isthmus were observed, on the land side, some remains of an aqueduct, that formerly supplied this city with water; a cistern, somewhat resembling those of the Fons Signatus; and a fountain, that rises with sufficient strength to turn a mill.

Pursuing his route over a narrow plain, by the sea-shore, our author arrived at Seidé, the ancient Sidon, about sun-set. This is a larger town than Acré, blest by nature with a salubrious air and pleasant situation. The castle, built by the celebrated Fakr el Din, is surrounded by the water, and the magnificent palace, which he erected in the Italian style, is now entirely ruinous. There was formerly a convenient port, formed by a ridge of rocks; but it was filled up by command of the emir, to prevent the Turkish vessels from entering. The sea here evidently encroaches on the land, as a large tessellated pavement, of variegated marbles, representing a horse, festoons, &c. still remains close to the sea, on the northern extremity of the city. Several granite columns are worked into the walls, and some of them are fixed as posts on the bridge leading to the fort. A part of the city wall still remains, with one gate, in the vicinity of which is a small, square building, that contains the tombs of the emirs of the Druses, who died when Seidé was in their possession

possession. The castle of St. Louis was seen by our author, who observes, that it commands the city from an adjacent eminence on the south.

The rent of houses, and the mode of living, are much cheaper at Seidé than at Acré, and the government milder, so that strangers are not liable to be insulted. The town is completely encompassed with gardens, that produce an abundance of mulberry trees. Silk is the chief commodity of traffic. A considerable commerce was formerly carried on with Marseilles, but in consequence of a disagreement between Pasha Jassar and some French factors, it has been annihilated.

From Seidé, our author made an excursion, on the 6th of April, to visit the district of Kesrawán, where he arrived after a ride of about four hours, having travelled over a rugged ascending road, till he reached the convent of Mochanlus, which is pleasantly situated, in a romantic country, about half way up the acclivity.

Next morning he visited a convent of Maronites, in Kesrawán, where the neighbouring mountains are richly embellished with lofty firs; clothed with innumerable herbs and odoriferous shrubs; and studded with flowers, whose colours might vie with those of the rainbow. Myrtles and lavender grow wild upon these eminences, and the rose of Jericho adorns the banks of the rivulets, while the valleys are planted with a profusion of vines and mulberry trees; and corn, and lentils are produced in surprising abundance. The convent commands a capital prospect of Seidé, the sea, and the adjacent coast.

The Christians possess much greater indulgence in Kesrawán than in other places, and are even permitted to announce the commencement of di-

vine service by ringing of bells. The Maronite *Munkis* are by no means idle, as they serve themselves in the various capacities of cooks, carpenters, taylors, gardeners, &c. each having his distinct province.

Having satisfied his curiosity at Kesrawán, Mr. Browne returned to Seidé, and on the 9th of April, set out for Beirút, the ancient Birythus, where he arrived, after crossing a tract of deep sand, and passing two rivers, one of which was the Damer, or ancient Tamyras.

Notwithstanding the shameful neglect and mutilation of the fine groves at Beirút, since the death of Fakr el Din, emir of the Druses, who evidently delighted in its improvement, the approach is even now grander to this town than to any other on the coast of Lybia. The city itself is of small dimensions, and was unwall'd till it was assaulted by the Russians, when Jezzar built the walls, with several towers, to give it a formidable appearance; but this defence is extremely slight, and the flatness of the situation is also a great disadvantage. It has a good and commodious wharf, and European vessels cast anchor in the summer near a small point of land, that runs into the sea before the city, and is denominated Beirút Point; but in the winter they prefer an anchorage in a sort of gulf, towards the north, which is sheltered by the mountain from the strong winds, and is reputed exceedingly secure. The staple commodity of the country is raw silk, exported to Cairo, Damascus, Aleppo, and Europe. A pottery is also established, from whence jars and jugs are carried to all parts of the coast; and, from the peculiar nature of the clay, are held in the highest estimation. Provisions are rather

ther dear; the fish is superior to that of Seide, and the red wine of Libanus, which is brought here, is tolerably good; but, as it cannot be transported from the mountain, without a licence from the custom-house, it is much dearer than formerly. Its present price, however, is only equivalent to 4l. sterling per cwt.

The suburbs of Beirút are nearly as extensive as the city itself, consisting of beautiful gardens, adorned with a profusion of figs, olives, and other fruit trees, and supplied with houses for the residence of the proprietors. Mr. Browne, however, was unable to find any of the gardens and apartments formed by Fakr el Din, on the European principle, or any of those statues, which that magnificent improver's residence in Italy had enabled him to collect.

On the 22d of April, our author visited a pleasant village, called Antura, on Mount Libanus, having passed a considerable stream, denominated the Nahr Beirút, which is the famous river of Adonis, so exquisitely described by Milton. In the vicinity of Antura is a convent of nuns; and the dress of the Christians, in this part of the country, seems perfectly unrestrained, as they adorn their turbans with various colours, even with *green*, which is accounted sacred by the Musulmen. They are likewise freely indulged in the exercise of their religion; but despotism appears so natural to the clime, that those who live under Christian governors, complain of an equal oppression with persons who are subject to the *Turks*. "The poor people," says our author, "*are fleeced by the shechs, and the shechs themselves are fleeced by the pasha Jezzar.*"

From hence Mr. Browne made a little excursion to Harifé, the residence of the Maronite patriarch, and returned to Beirut. He then joined a party of disbanded soldiers, and proceeded in their company towards Tripoli, over a tract of country that is noted for an excellent production of tobacco.

On the third day he arrived at the place of destination, which he describes as a large city, situated about twelve furlongs from the sea. The houses are well built, and the generality of the streets are paved. On the highest ground, toward the south, is the castle, formerly possessed by the earls of Tripoli; it is a large, strong edifice, and commands a partial view of Mount Libanus. The population is estimated, by our author, at sixteen thousand individuals, among whom are some of the richest and most respectable Mahometan merchants in the empire. This city is the seat of a pasha, and, together with Damascus, Acre, and Aleppo, constitutes the only four pathaliks of Lybia. That of Tripoli is the smallest in power and territory. Vessels anchor near the shore, and are sheltered from the fury of the winds by a ridge of rocks, but the situation is deemed rather insecure. The gardens in the neighbourhood are well stocked with mulberry and other fruit trees; but, owing to a considerable quantity of stagnant water, the air is very unhealthy. The chief article of commerce is silk; and the miri, or public revenue, paid to Constantinople, is about 1000*l.* sterling per annum.

Quitting Tripoli, on the 30th of April, our author continued his route to Ladakia, the ancient Laodicea, built by Seleucus Nicanor, in the
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nour of his mother. The first appearance of the city was extremely melancholy, as exhibiting the ravages of an earthquake, which, in the year 1796, had shaken a great part of its buildings to the earth, and swept numbers of the inhabitants to an untimely grave. It is situated in an extensive plain, is unwall'd, and only paved in part; but the streets are perfectly clean; the air is salubrious, and the fragrance of the surrounding gardens delightful. The town contains eight mosques, and has a convenient port, across the entrance of which is a bar of sand. The government is in the hands of a deputy, sent thither by the pasha of Tripoli.

On the 5th of May, Mr Browne departed for Aleppo, in company with four other persons, and on the second day passed through one of the most picturesque countries that he had ever seen in the whole course of his travels, and which presented a scene—

Where round the lofty rock's majestic brow,
Luxuriant foliage twines, and flowrets blow.
Amidst the cliffs, unnumber'd shrubs appear;
Or murmur'g riv'let's soothe the traveller's ear:
Whilst aromatic herbs perfume the gale,
And vines and olives crown the fertile vale. SMITH.

The following day was occupied in traversing another romantic district, and the travellers passed the night in the open air, at Shawr, in the vicinity of the majestic river Orontes. The town of Shawr is populous, and has a good caravanserai, originally designed for the accommodation of the caravan, which rests there in its journey from Constantinople to Mecca. At a small distance is a good stone bridge, consisting of seven arches.

Continu

Continuing their route, the travellers arrived on the fifth day at the village of Kestín, remarkable for the number of its pigeon-houses, which supply the country even to Aleppo. The natives are a sect of pretended Mahometans; but, when in company with Christians, they affect to approve of their religion. Their women are fair, and tolerably featured; they go unveiled, and at Martrawán, which is not far distant, they are introduced, by their friends, to the notice of strangers. The circumjacent fields are extremely rich in soil, and yield a great abundance of wheat and barley.

From hence our author proceeded for about eight hours, when he came within view of Aleppo, and in about two hours more arrived at that magnificent city.

Aleppo is well built, and paved with stone; the site is rocky and unequal; a number of tall cypress trees, contrasted with the white minarets of the mosques, give it a most picturesque appearance, and the gardens chiefly produce pistachios. The houses are clean, substantial, and commodious. The people are distinguished by an air of affected politeness, seldom found in the other towns of Lybia; and even their dialect has its characteristic marks. The population and buildings are apparently on the increase; but, in proportion as the capital is augmented, the surrounding villages are gradually deserted.

The sheerefs, or descendants of Mahomet, here form a considerable faction, consisting of all ranks, from the highest imam to the most obscure peasant. Their number is computed, by our author, at near sixty thousand individuals. The Janizaries, who form an opposite faction, are greatly

greatly superior in courage, but little acquainted with the use of arms, or the manœuvres of a battle. The force of the two parties is therefore merely balanced, and many disputes arise for offices of profit or authority, which usually end in bloodshed.

The manufactures of silk and cotton are in a flourishing condition, and yield an excellent subsistence both to Mahometans and Christians. Large caravans frequently arrive at Aleppo with coffee, from Moccba; cherry-tree pipes, and tobacco, from Persia; and muslins, shawls, &c. from India.

Besides the above-mentioned manufactures of Aleppo, and the productions of the surrounding country, which are regularly exported to the westward, three or four caravans, laden with pistachio nuts, and other articles of merchandise, proceed annually through Anatolia, to Constantinople. A commercial intercourse is also maintained with Antioch, Damascus, Lodakia, Tripoli, and the eastern towns in the vicinity of the Euphrates.

At a small distance from the Antioch gate are the quarries, which supplied the stone for the erection of the city. On both sides of a deep cut through the solid rock, are seen the mouths of several caverns, from whence a number of passages branch out in various directions. It is probable, that these quarries were designed for the native artificers for some useful purpose. Several rough columns and perpendicular faces are left, which admit some portion of light; the walls are hewn to a greater degree of smoothness than is usually seen in such places. They have been evidently occupied afterwar-

marks of fire, mangers for horses, and burial places, may be clearly discovered. Probably they afforded a retreat to the disbanded Dellis, who have been frequently known to assault and sometimes murder the unsuspecting passenger. Without the city there is a large cemetery, where Mr. Browne discovered the tomb of an Englishman, inscribed with the date 1613.

The price of provisions has increased greatly within a few years. Meat is good and plentiful. Of fish there are none, but a few eels, found in a small river, called the Coik, which descends from Aintab, and after passing through the city, is lost in a marsh on the west. Wine is extremely dear, as none is produced in the neighbourhood.

At Aleppo, our author witnessed an illumination of the mosques on Thursday night, to usher in the Mahometan sabbath; a practice unknown at Cairo, and other cities of the south. The dress of the natives approximates to that of Constantinople, rather than to that of Egypt and Southern Lybia. In wet weather a kind of paten is worn by persons of both sexes, but its shape is disagreeable to the eye, and its noise on the pavement insufferable to the ear. The women of Aleppo are rather masculine, and of brown complexions.

On the 11th of June, our author recommenced his journey, and after traversing a country sown with hashish, a kind of flax, and passing the Orontes, at a ferry, he arrived at Antioch, on the 14th, which he thus describes at the period of his visit.

Antioch, now called Antaki, is governed by a mohassel, who receives his appointment from Constantinople. The walls are extensive, run-
ing

ning from the river Orontes, the southern boundary of the city, up to the summit of the mountain. They are substantially built, and are flanked with several towers. A bridge is erected over the river, which meanders through a fertile valley; and a large castle on the mountain, now much dilapidated, commands an extensive prospect of the country. The situation of Antioch is superior, in all respects, to that of Aleppo; the air is more salubrious; it is well supplied with wine from the mountain, and a variety of sea fish; and the mouth of the river forms a convenient haven for small vessels. The length of the plain of Antioch is computed at about ten miles and a half, the width six miles; the language generally spoken by the inhabitants, is the Turkish.

From hence Mr. Browne made an excursion to Suadéa, the ancient Seleucia, at the distance of four hours from Antioch; the intervening road is agreeably diversified with hill and dale, and the country richly embroidered with a profusion of flowering and odoriferous plants; as myrtolcanders, cyclamens, &c. yet the population is apparently very small. After crossing four rapid and translucent streams, that run into the Orontes, our author obtained a night's lodging in a gaol of mulberries, which served to furnish a livelihood for the numerous family of a hospitable native.

Seleucia presents to the contemplative a striking idea of the immense labour used by former possessors, to render it convenient for purposes of traffic, though it is now almost neglected by its present masters. One of the Doric order, still remains entire.

rock, that has been hewn out into several apartments. Some portion likewise remains of the substantial wall, which defended Seleucia towards the sea. Though the port be at present dry, the sand in the bottom is not higher than the surface of the sea. It is formed by a mole of large stones, and must consequently have been commodious and secure, though of small dimensions. Towards the north was observed a curious passage in the rock, leading by a gentle declivity from the summit of the mountain to the brink of the river. Its length is above six hundred common paces, its height from thirty to fifty feet, and its breadth about twenty feet. A streamlet of pure water runs down its side from the mountain to Seleucia, and the upper part of the rock is full of artificial excavations. Towards the sea there are some catacombs, ornamented with mouldings, cornices, and pilasters.

Our traveller now returned to Antioch, and from thence proceeded safely to Aleppo, notwithstanding the caravans are frequently attacked by two wandering tribes, called the Kurds and the Turcomans, who usually pass the winter in the plains of Antioch, and during the summer infest the vicinity of Anatolia.

On the 23d of July, Mr. Browne set out with the caravan for Damascus, where he arrived, after a journey of about fifteen days. The approach to the city is very remarkable, being embellished for several miles with a number of gardens, and then by a paved way, of considerable length. The situation of Damascus is in an extensive plain, adorned with trees, flowers, &c. to the length of nine miles, and the breadth of more than four miles and a half. The walls are

of a circular form, ancient, and ston very lofty. They are furnished with and near the mountain are some Sar mains of a mosque and palace, bearing inscriptions in the Coptic character.

Damascus is the seat of a considerable and its manufactures, consisting of silk ton, afford employment and support number of Mussulmen and Christians soap is also made, and carried to Egyptian parts of Lybia. Such European are used by the orientals, are brought from Beirút, and Tripoli, by the regular From Persia and the east, shawls, and the rich fabrics of Surat, are conveyed caravans of Bagdad. Formerly the Dam were extremely adverse to maritime and it is but lately that they have persuaded to transport their merchandise Constantinople.

Among a number of eleemosynary ments in the city, the most remarkable constructed by command of Sultan the reception of strangers, though at present appropriated to other purposes. The consists of a large quadrangle, lined with made, and roofed with a succession of fir The adjoining mosque is a magnificent covered with a cupola; it has two min the entrance is supported by four beautiful columns of red granite. The apartments numerous, and the kitchen, on the side of the mosque, is perfectly consonant with the *dour* of the establishment.

The Damascenes have been formerly their intolerant behaviour to Franks

was not experienced by our author, who describes them as a sober, industrious, and unassuming people. The women and children are generally fair, and well featured. The female dress is much the same with that of Constantinople. The population may be estimated at two hundred thousand souls.

Exclusive of contingencies and arbitrary exactions, the land-tax and the jizie constitute the only resource in the province of Damascus; the *miri*, or public revenue, may probably amount to five hundred thousand pounds sterling. The *pashalik* is the first in Asia; the city is divided into twenty-three districts, each of which is under its distinct magistrate. The shops in the extensive bazars are all furnished with every species of merchandise, and both the population and trade are gradually increasing, under the government of a just and equitable pasha.

On the departure of the sacred caravan from Damascus, the pasha is rendered accountable for its safety; and when he receives the *senjak* she-rif, or ensign of the prophet, from the governor of the castle, he is obliged to give a writing, before witnesses, in which he engages to bring it back. When he approaches the city, on his return, a messenger is sent to Constantinople, with water from the famous well Zemzem, in the vicinage of Mecca, and dates from Mediné, which are presented to the emperor on his visiting the mosque. The vizir then presents a list of pashas for the ensuing year, and the *firmans* are made out in due form.

On the day after his arrival, our author witnessed the entrance of the grand caravan from Mecca, when some of the most wealthy pilgrims
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tion.

The ensuing Saturday presented a still scene to the European, viz. the entrance of the pasha of Damascus, who is always the head of the caravan by office. It entered the city in the following manner: three hundred dervishes, valry, mounted on Arabian horses; fifty musketeers seated on dromedaries, with muskets and large carbines; some great officers, well armed and elegantly clothed; part of the pasha's Janizaries, followed by the pasha with his officers, and the remainder of his household. Next advanced the tatarawan of the Damascus pasha, another troop of four hundred musketeers, a body of thirty musketeers, and one hundred and fifty Albanians in uniform, before whom was borne the standard of Mahomet, composed of green silk, with sentences of the Koran embroidered in gold, and the magnificent sword of the pasha brought from Mecca, attended by a strong

with the fur of a black fox, and accompanied by his two sons, who, like himself, were mounted on the finest steeds of Arabia. Upwards of a hundred camels were employed in bearing the tents and baggage of the pasha, and the whole procession passed without the least noise or disturbance, to the great credit of the spectators, whose usual repast had been delayed several hours in consequence of their curiosity.

Quitting Damascus, on the 16th of August, Mr. Browne set out for Balbec, or Heliopolis, with only one attendant. After passing through a district, finely adorned with vines and fig-trees, he reached the convent of Seidnaia, which commands an excellent view of Damascus and the surrounding plain. From thence he proceeded through the village of Malula, (which contains a convent, said to have been erected in the time of Justinian), to Yebrud, the ancient Jebruda, where the inhabitants are chiefly Mussulmen. He now travelled in company with a Greek bishop to a small town, on the north of the wood called Mara, from whence he proceeded under the Dahr el Chur, said to be the highest summit of the Anti-Libanian mountains, and, on the 20th, arrived at Balbec, after descending, for nearly three hours, through a steep and rugged glen, in the mountain.

From the high grounds our author had a complete view of Balbec, but as he observed nothing particular to add to the description of former travellers, he is silent upon that subject, and hastens to inform us, that he proceeded to the town of Zahblé, pleasantly situated among the mountains, and embellished with a great abundance of Lombardy poplars. . It is divided into

of Christians, is sufficiently large to ten
seven hundred warriors to the field of battle
the vicinity of Zahhlé is a structure, called
tomb of Noah: its length is about six
which the orientals suppose to have been the
stature of Noah; and it is apparently the
of an aqueduct. The pilgrims, who form
sited a neighbouring mosque, were ex
numerous, and the religious revenue is
amount to three hundred purses annually

After a wearisome progress, of two days
the ridge of the mountains, our author visited
convent of St. John, where a printing press was
established; but, owing to the high price of
paper, and the little demand for books, here
the press was stopped.

At Zibdané, on his return, he observed
of Grecian architecture, and from thence
taking his route through a fertile valley, into
by the river Baradé, he re-entered Damascus,
which he saw, in addition to his former

the city, while the others, that are cut down, are appropriated to the purpose of building, together with the walnut tree and the Lombardy poplar."

On the 7th of October, Mr. Browne set out on his return to Aleppo, where he arrived, after a journey of twelve days; having observed, in the course of his route, that almost every town and village was provided with a market, though the caravanseras were all in a ruinous condition.

From Aleppo our author set out on the 21st of October, in order to proceed through Anatolia to Constantinople. The direct road lies through Beilan, Adene, Konia, Kutahia, and Bursa; but, as the pasha of Beilan was in a state of rebellion, the caravan was constrained to turn to the north-east, and take an unusual route through the cities of Aintab, Kaisaria, and Angora. On the 30th they arrived at Aintab, which our author describes as a large place, inhabited promiscuously by Mahometans and Christians. It has a fortress and a garrison of Janizaries. There are five principal mosques, a castle built on an artificial elevation, and a large burying ground, which, at a distance, resembles an extensive suburb. The houses are built of stone. The chief commerce is leather and raw hides, cottons, and various coloured woollens. The language is the Turkish; and the government is vested in a mitsellim, who carries his authority from Constantinople.

After a progress of several days, our author ascended Mount Taurus, now denominated Karân. It is a chain of high rocks, running from east to west, chiefly inhabited by the Kûrds, and yielding a retreat, in the summer season, to the Turcomans, who then retire hither from the plain of Antioch. Several thousand acres, on the
mountain

mountains, abound with large cedars, savines junipers. The bases of the hills generally consist of tufa, and they are frequently intersected by streamlets of the purest water.

Descending from Mount Taurus, they are at an extensive plain, watered by the river S and surrounded with mountains. Here we visited the town of Bostân, where the natives, like the generality of Anatolians, form a striking contrast to the more polished inhabitants of L. The women are of fair and florid complexion, but rather ungraceful in their motions and station. They usually shelter their faces, from sun and rain, by broad, flat pieces of cloth placed upon the head, and fastened with strings under the chin. The more opulent have turbans of silver, the others are of copper. Exclusive of this curious ornament, the common dress consists of a short jacket and fringed turban. Here our author noticed some small, two-wheeled carts, drawn by two oxen. "The wheels," says he, "are arched, and the axle turns with them, consequently their progress is sufficiently noisy."

From hence, to Kaifaria, the country is poor but thinly inhabited and ill cultivated. Approaching the city there are, however, some productive fields, and the Lombardy poplar is again seen in great abundance.

Kaifaria is situated on the south side of a fertile plain, well watered by the Yermok and its rills, and containing a tolerable number of inhabitants. The city is surrounded by walls, which are, however, much dilapidated. The government is in the hands of a mitsellim, appointed from Constantinople. Great quantities of goods are transported from hence to various parts

our author observed great numbers of black buffaloes, and large shaggy camels, that are bred by the Turcomans.

Proceeding over a plain, that is nearly inundated by the river Tumm, and crossing a bridge over a rapid, but apparently shallow, stream, supposed one of the branches of the Halys, Mr. Browne reached Angora, on the 22d of November, about two hours before sun set.

This city, which is situated upon an eminence, near a small river, has a striking and agreeable appearance at a distance. It has been surrounded with a substantial wall, in some places apparently double; marks of a ditch are also clearly visible. The castle is very ancient, and may originally have been deemed impregnable, as it is erected on a high, perpendicular rock. A chain of outworks occupies all the elevated ground to a considerable extent. Our traveller passed three gates, on two of which he discovered some imperfect Greek inscriptions. On the north-west are said to be remains of an amphitheatre, but circumstances precluded him from visiting them. There are also some ruins of a magnificent curia, of Corinthian architecture, and marked with several inscriptions highly complimentary to the Emperor Augustus, in whose time the building was constructed.

The trade of Angora chiefly consists of yarn for shalloons and the native manufacture of stuffs. They likewise make shawls of goats hair, that are equal in width and quality to the Kashmirian; but the manufacturers are unable to work flowers in them. Good cloth was formerly fabricated, but this branch of business was soon abandoned for want of due encouragement. Large quantities

ties of opium are cultivated in this part of Anatolia, and wax is exported to various quarters.

The city itself is described, by our traveller, as one of the neatest he had ever visited; its streets are paved with large granite, but without foot-paths, and it is completely surrounded by mountains. There are, however, numerous gardens in the neighbourhood, that produce an abundance of fruits, particularly excellent pears, which are sometimes sent as presents to Constantinople. The esculent plants are merely sufficient for the consumption of the citizens; and corn is purchased at other places, as the land is employed to greater advantage in the cultivation of pasturage for the goats.

Quitting Angora, on the 16th of November, our author proceeded through Kostabec, Tourbeli, and Yeywa, to Ismit, or Nikmid, the ancient Nicomedia, a large maritime town, built on the side of a hill, to the east of an extensive plain. It is paved, but extremely dirty, and the houses are built of wood. Almost every habitation has a garden attached to it. The khan is neat, but not very spacious. The adjacent mountains are very lofty, and a long bridge leads from the town over a marshy land, near the river Sakaria, which disembogues itself into the Black Sea. A great number of Greeks were observed among the inhabitants.

From hence Mr. Browne departed, on the 7th of December, and, after passing along the shore, till the morning of the 9th, when he arrived at Scutari, he continued his progress immediately to Constantinople, where he found a new institution had been recently ordained by the reigning sultan, who, finding his soldiers unable to con-

with those of Russia, had, with the assistance of the French, founded a regular corps, of about one thousand infantry, clothed in a tighter dress than formerly, supplied by government with muskets and bayonets, and furnished by the French with some brass field pieces, battering cannon, and flying artillery.

After correcting the police of the capital, Sultan Selim turned his attention to the encouragement of literature among his subjects, and has accordingly revived the mathematical school, restored the printing office, and given an establishment to an engraver on copper. In the mathematical and marine school, a substantial and commodious edifice, there is an abundance of every thing except *books and instruments*. There are, however, *professors* who *meet and smoke* a social pipe, and thus the end of the institution is considered as fully answered. Such is the consequence of the sultan's ignorance of the world, which led him to suppose that his commands could inspire genius, and that a pension could confer capacity. A new Arabic type was casting for the printing office, but whether the improvement of the type may tend to diffuse substantial knowledge, among the Turks, is a question not easily answered. The subjects given for engravings are, the armillary sphere, some plans of fortification, the box compass, &c.

Among a variety of public libraries the most elegant is that of Raghib Pasha, formerly grand vizir, but whose head was devoted a sacrifice to the envy of the sultan. This edifice is erected in the middle of a square court, consisting entirely of marble. The tomb of Raghib Pasha, adorned with gilt brass, forms the centre of the library
Arcos

Around are elegant carpets and cushions, and numerous books on all chiefly theology. The light is well placed perfectly quiet, and constant a librarian, so that our author observed a building or institution more the kind.

Fronting the street, there is a school by the same pasha. It is a convent thirty-five feet long and a proportion. About a hundred boys are here reading, penmanship, and the more of the Mahometan theology. A young man, who has lately embraced the pretended prophet, is now established and has undertaken to read lectures on mathematical subjects. There is a confidence for books, consisting of numerous supplied.

Strata of coals are found at a considerable distance, on the European side; but to work, on account of the sandy soil to fall in. The mine has lately been

Previous to his departure, our author visited a Greek printing house, conducted by an an. The press was then employed in a small exhortation in the Greek language by the patriarch of Jerusalem, against the prevailing tenets of deism and atheism off about a thousand sheets a day.

The Turkish ladies, in fine weather, follow the European custom of taking the air; *faces* are veiled, and they are likewise in small latticed waggons, they are unable to attract the admiration of by a display of their charms. O

na's, sister of the monarch, has lately commanded a villa to be built on the Bosphorus, partly in the Chinese and partly in the European style.

The navy has been considerably improved by some French ship-builders. It now amounts to fifteen vessels, fit for service, and of considerable force.

Between the city and Adrianople, the country is entirely plain, and the capital, on the land side, is capable of repulsing a victorious army. On the other side, the forts are defended by the uncertainty of the winds and channels.

Having satisfied his curiosity with respect to this famous city, and made such remarks in the course of his observations as we have laid before our readers, Mr. Browne proceeded to Wallachia, from whence he travelled through Vienna, Prague, Dresden, Potsdam, Berlin, and Ham-
burgh, and on the 16th of September 1798, he arrived in London, after devoting near seven years to a toilsome and perilous research, which reflects the highest honour upon his abilities, prudence, and perseverance, and which must ever rank high among the generous efforts of Europeans.



TRAVELS
IN
UPPER AND LOWER
E G Y P T,

BY
M. SONNINI,

PERFORMED IN THE YEARS 1777 AND 1778.

WHILE contemplating the writings of numerous travellers, who, at various times, and in different parts of the globe, have devoted the best of their abilities to the general instruction of mankind, and the more immediate satisfaction of their countrymen, we feel a peculiar pleasure in presenting to our readers those of Sonnini, which, for their undoubted veracity, interesting remarks, and artless, yet elegant descriptions, have been justly appreciated by the sons of France, and cordially welcomed to the British shore, by a generous race of men, who are ever ready to reward the exertions of merit with immortal applause.

The French government, having appointed M. Tott *inspector* of the ports of the Levant and Barbary, and commanded a vessel to be fitted out for his passage thither, from Toulon, our au-
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thor received orders to embark on board the ship and to follow its destination. He accordingly quitted his friends at Montford, and took his horses to Marseilles, where he continued a few hours.

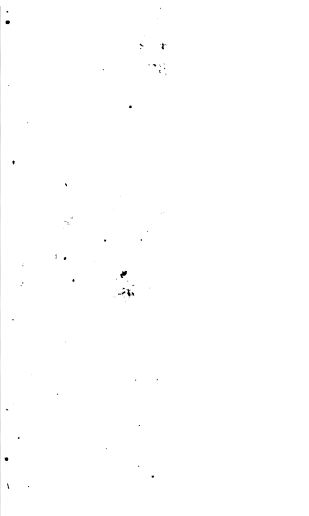
On his arrival at La Ciotat, (which he visited in consequence of some memorials, addressed to Versailles, by an individual, who had formed the idea of cutting through a hill in the vicinity of the sea, under pretence of extracting a large quantity of coral), he received the following particulars of a curious ceremony, which annually takes place at the latter end of December. A considerable number of men, armed with swords and pistols, set out in quest of a little bird, called troglodytes by the ancients, and still retained that name in the natural history of birds, &c. by Guenau de Montbeillard. When they find it, which requires no great time, they take care to have one ready for the occasion, solemnly suspended from the middle of a pole, and carried round the town by two men, who support it on their shoulders, as if it were a great burden. The bird is then weighed, in a large pair of scales, and the remainder of the day is devoted to festivity and merriment. The appellation bestowed by the inhabitants on the troglodyte is equally singular with the above ceremony, and is called at La Ciotat, "the pole cat, or farthe woodcock," merely because its plumage is so similar to that of the woodcock, which they erroneously suppose to be engendered by the troglodyte cat. With respect to the projected excavation works that had begun were all abandoned, the enterprise itself entirely relinquished.



Curious Ceremony at La Pïotat !

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Stopping at Cassis, on his return to Marseilles, our traveller observed two manufactories, for the working and polishing of coral, which is usually carried to the African coast, there to be given in exchange for slaves. The vineyards in the neighbourhood of Cassis produce a white wine, of an excellent quality.

As M. Sonnini understood at Marseilles, that the frigate, then equipping at Toulon, would not be completely ready for some time, he undertook an excursion into Languedoc, with the secretary of M. Tott. In the environs of Cette, and along the coast, he collected a variety of volcanic matter and marine productions; at Balarac, they visited the baths; at Frontignan, they amused themselves with a view of the famous vineyards, and from thence proceeded along the finest road in France, to Montpellier. This pleasant ramble, however, had taken up so much time, that it was requisite to revisit the coast of Provence, whether they resolved to return by sea; they accordingly agreed for their passage, with the master of a tartan, then in the port of Cette, and were waiting at the inn, for the hour of departure, when they were abruptly told, that the commandant of the town was highly offended at their conduct, in presuming to leave the port without his consent; that he was particularly incensed against Sonnini, from whom, as an officer, he expected the ceremony of a visit; and that he now requested them to repair to his house, where several other persons, who designed to take their passage in the same tartan, were already assembled. In consequence of this curious message, our author and his companion waited upon M. Quérulle, officer of invalid

and commandant of Cette, who, on their arrival, informed our traveller, that he was much surprised at his neglect, and observed, that he should certainly have invited him to partake of his soup, had he thought proper to pay him a visit. Sonnini briefly answered, that, as a stranger, a traveller, and officer, who did not belong to the army, he must implore forgiveness for his ignorance of the commandant's existence, whose *soup* was by no means the object of his researches.

Evidently disconcerted at the conclusion of this pointed answer, M. Quérulle told him, he was at liberty to depart, whenever he thought proper, and then turning, with an air of affected dignity, towards the other travellers, he commanded them to go about their business, as he had no concern with them. Our author and his companions accordingly proceeded towards their little vessel, greatly amused with this ludicrous adventure, which appeared so analogous to the name of the commandant.

On the 26th of April 1777, our author sailed from the road of Toulon, in the *Atalante* frigate; but, the wind proving unfavourable, the mariners were obliged to cast anchor, the following afternoon, in the road Des Vignettes, in the bay of Toulon, where the elevated coast, finely clothed with the productions of Ceres, and agreeably spotted with a variety of rural edifices, forms a charming contrast to the naked sides of the mountains, which compose the back ground of the interesting scene, and which, notwithstanding their sterile appearance, afford, in some parts, a substantial and odoriferous food, to the justly celebrated flocks in the vicinage of Toulon.

On the 2d of May, a breeze, from the north west, enabled the seamen to resume their voyage till the morning of the 4th, when they were again baffled by adverse winds, and necessitated to put into Genoa.

As the city of Genoa has been ably and frequently described in the writings of other authors, Sonnini is silent upon the subject, and, in place thereof, presents his readers with the recital of a little occurrence, that furnishes a trait of national character, and is, therefore, deemed worthy the attention of the public. Visiting the opera at Genoa, our traveller remarked two female dancers, who sustained the principal part in the ballet, and who were both young and extremely beautiful. Their performance, however, was essentially different, as the movements and attitudes of the one might be justly said to be directed by the graces, while the steps and springs of the other, though apparently superior in point of exertion, were in reality no more than mere feats of activity; yet such was the corrupted taste of the Genoese, that the former was regarded with universal coldness, while the latter was received with a thunder of applause. Anxious to correct the error of the audience, and to transfer the smiles of approbation to the side of merit, Sonnini, with several of his countrymen and fellow passengers, took different posts in the theatre, and applauded their favourite actress so warmly, that a few of the Genoese began to join them; but the triumph was ensured, in spite of all their endeavours, to the other dancer. Next day they went, in greater numbers, and espoused the cause of the neglected graces with still greater zeal, till the struggle became suffi-

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ently violent, to excite the solicitude of the senate, who accordingly passed a decree, for the prohibition of any future disturbance, and ordered sentries to be stationed in various parts of the house. The Frenchmen, however, still remained retolute in their purpose, till the resistance gradually subsided, and, after a few more representations, they had the satisfaction of seeing their design completely accomplished, as the actress, who had so recently triumphed over her superiors, was now seen with indifference, and the public admiration was entirely transferred to her, of whom Sonnini had showed himself the champion. Satisfied with his success, in a point so important, our author gave an entertainment on board the *Atalante*, to the two dancers, and endeavoured to make some amends, by his urbanity, for that derangement of success which his exertions had caused to the former protégée of the Genoese audience.

After a delay of ten days, our traveller and his companions sailed from the harbour of Genoa, on the 13th of May, with a fresh gale, from the north-east, that bore them rapidly along, ~~from~~ the lofty and fertile coast of that beautiful part of Italy; while the maritime Alps, which resembled an immense amphitheatre, incrustated with perpetual snow, gradually receded from the sight, and the high mountains, that skirt the gulf of Spezzia, presented themselves to view. Their summits were also capped with snow, and they were destitute of vegetation, but productive of *the finest marbles that are exported from Italy.*

On the left, the mariners passed the small, circular island of Gorgona, subject to the grand duke of Tuscany, and afterwards passed between Cape
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Corso and Capraria, a small island, appertaining to the republic of Genoa. It is scarcely worthy a better appellation, than a barren rock; but it contains, notwithstanding, a few houses, that are inhabited by excellent sailors.

On the following day, they plied to windward, between Cape Corso and the island of Elba, a possession of the king of Naples. It has two excellent harbours, and affords some good marble; but is more particularly famed for its mines of iron and magnets, which render its approach perceptible to navigators, from the great variations to which the compass is there subject. The method of working iron in this isle is more economical, more expeditious, and more advantageous than that of the common forges, in other parts of Europe; the metal which is produced, is equal to the best Swedish, in toughness and malleability.

The coast between Cape Corso and Bastia is composed of steep mountains, many of them covered with snow. The city of Bastia is pleasantly situated upon the declivity of a hill, and its harbour affords secure anchorage for small vessels, though it is unfit for the reception of ships of war.

Towards noon, the *Atalante* passed near a bare, and desert rock, called Monte Christo, situated at a small distance, to the southward of Elba, from which it seems to have been detached, by one of those convulsions of nature, which frequently happen in these seas. The line of land, that originally united the two islands, may still be traced by an intervening rock, called the *Plancoa*, that is almost even with the water's edge.

At the commencement of the afternoon, the weather was fine, and there was a light air

from the south-east; but, towards evening, the wind changed, and blew strong from the south-west. The sky was then overcast; the advancing night was extremely dark, and derived additional horror from the frequent flashes of lightning, that gilded the frowning clouds with a transitory blaze, and illumined the agitated waves of the ocean. This gale of wind continued till the 15th, when the vessel was abreast of Le Bocche di Bonifacio,* and about ten leagues distant from the land. The sea is here repulsed by numberless shoals and a great extent of coast, and the winds are frequently changed by a variety of straits, so that few ships navigate in these latitudes without meeting with bad weather. During the tempest in the morning, several quails and turtle-doves endeavoured to shield themselves from the fury of the contending elements by settling upon the ship: they were all so extremely fatigued or terrified, that they suffered themselves to be taken by the hand. At some distance from the frigate, the billows were ploughed by numerous shoal of porpoises, while, on the other side, a turtle lay sluggishly upon the surface.

After encountering another gale, from the south-west, the seamen discovered, on the 17th, the island of Ustica, a dependency of Sicily. It is well cultivated, though only about two miles in circumference: it is well known, as a retreat to the pirates, who infest these seas, though it is only four years since the Neapolitan monarch resolved to erect a fort upon it, in order to keep them away. They had also seen the Sicilian promontory, called

* The straits which separate the island of Ustica from that of Sardinia.

San Vitto, and about twelve o'clock they cast anchor, at the mouth of the harbour, at Palermo, and dispatched an officer, to compliment the viceroy of Sicily, and to negotiate with him the point of salutes. It was accordingly agreed, that the *Atalante* should fire fifteen guns, and that a similar number should be returned by the citadel; but such was the state of the Sicilian artillery, that two full hours elapsed, while the gunners were busily employed in raising some half-buried pieces of cannon, placing them upon blocks of wood, instead of carriages, and putting them in a condition to fulfil the viceroy's engagement. The Barbary corsairs were well acquainted with this shameful neglect, and frequently availed themselves of it, by cutting vessels out of the very harbour.

As only three days were spent at Palermo, our author employed them to the best advantage, by visiting, rapidly, every thing of note in the city and its environs, which are already well known, by the narrations of various travellers, and the beautiful delineations of different artists.

The harbour is one of the securest in these seas, and is defended by a fortress: its form is circular, but its artillery, as already described, is actually contemptible. The city, with the suburbs and circumjacent walks, presents to the spectator an agreeable and richly-diversified amphitheatre, while the back scenery is rendered highly picturesque, by a chain of lofty mountains, whose naked and uncultivated summits aspire to the clouds, immediately behind the city. The streets are well built, wide, straight, and paved with large stones; the largest of them may be said to resemble that of St. Honoré, at Paris, by its splend

splendid illumination of the shops and houses; by the number of equipages, beaus behind them; and by the crowds that pass and repass continually. At the extremities of the city are four handsome squares, each with two streets leading to them, which, taken together, form a square called the Ottangolo.

Such of the Sicilians as are not labourers, are so constantly used to go in coach, that they would deem it highly to make use of their legs; hence, the carriage is very great, and a foreigner, of respectable appearance, of seven or eight livres per day. The dress is universally worn at Palermo, by every description. The hair-dresser, with his leather bag; the cobbler, with his leather apron, and, in short, every artisan, in the discharge of his respective profession, may be there seen long toledo by his side, an old, full bonnet upon his head, and most commonly a pair of spectacles hanging upon his nose. The houses are magnificently decorated, and overloaded with ornaments, in such a manner as to give offence to good taste. The principal objects of admiration, which embellish the city, are, some excellent edifices, as the superb altar of St. Catharine's, composed of the finest marble, which, by a singular form, forms a broad festoon border round it; twenty-four columns of oriental granite, that surround the cathedral; several tombs of popes, and an immense tabernacle of lapis lazuli.

The temple, which has been erected in honour of the sciences, is much dilapidated.

museum is a confused assemblage of uninteresting objects; the collection of animals is most wretched, merely consisting of a few monsters, preserved in spirits of wine, and of worm-eaten skins, that are literally dropping to pieces; there are, however, some valuable antiques and some curious petrifications.

The adjacent country is extremely pleasant. La Bagaria, a canton, at nine miles distance from the city, is justly celebrated for the beauty of its plains, the richness of its soil, the variety of its culture, and the numerous villas with which it is embellished. The road that leads to it, is entirely lined with aloes and Indian figs. In this part, our author saw the palace of prince Palagoni, which is really so shocking a monument of bad taste, that it does not even merit the appellation of folly. The exterior and avenues are crowded with a prodigious number of clumsy statues, thrown promiscuously together, and representing monsters, so disgusting, that they cease to be ridiculous. The style of the interior is perfectly analogous. The walls of the apartments are plated with coloured glass, in imitation of marble, and the ceiling is composed of numerous fragments of looking-glasses, which reflect objects in a thousand different ways. Here, also, the spectator is shown large crucifixes, and pyramids, constructed of cups, saucers, coffee-pots, and other articles of earthen ware, arranged in such a manner, as to form the most inconsistent assemblage. In the chapel, there is a group of angels, entirely naked, of the most beautiful forms and brilliant colouring, with a horrible wooden figure in the midst of them, representing a dead man, partly devoured by worms.

worms. As this piece of disgusting abuse is unluckily executed in such a manner, it appears natural at the first glance, many who have visited this grotesque edifice, fainted at the unexpected sight, and some experienced the most disastrous consequences from their ill-timed curiosity. The fortune of the proprietor, it seems, is now vested in the hands of trustees, as his friends have found he was ruining himself, by the execution of his favourite, but preposterous, absurdities.

Adjoining the edifice of Palagoni, stands the palace of Prince Valguarnera, which forms a striking contrast to the former, as considerable skill is displayed both in its construction and situation. Its situation and prospect are exquisitely pleasant: it is embellished with a noble garden, a fine piece of water, and an elegant theatre for private representations, while to these advantages is joined, the urbanity of its proportions which renders it indeed a most delightful abode.

From hence, our traveller made an excursion to a small town, denominated Montreale, built on the summit of a steep mountain, at the termination of a new and excellent road, guarded on each side by a wall, breast high, sprinkled with crystal streamlets, that lave the gentle declivity, and perfumed by aromatic odours which rise from an adjacent forest of orange and lemon trees. The most remarkable object at Montreale, is a large church, erected by William the Good. It is completely incrustated with marble, and the principal altar is of massy silver, admirably executed.

Among other remarkable things, in the environs of Palermo, a convent of Capuchin

is pointed out to the curiosity of strangers : it is situated at a small distance from the town, and its gardens serve for a public promenade. Beneath the monastery is a large cave, divided into four great galleries, and lighted by means of apertures at each extremity. Here are preserved all the friars, who have died since the foundation of the convent, as well as the * bodies of several individuals of the town, who were apparently fearful to be confounded with the rest of mankind, even after their decease.

But hastening to quit this dreary abode, our author gives the following animated picture of Sicily's privileged soil, and its exuberant productions. "Warmed," says he, "by the genial heat of the solar rays, and by subterraneous fire, the earth rejects scarcely any kind of culture; whether bedecked with a carpet of beautiful green; enriched with the golden harvests, whose abundance formerly procured this island the name of the Granary of Rome; or, covered with trees of every kind, bearing odoriferous fruits and flowers, she always presents herself in the rich dress of fertility."

The women, seen by our author, in that part of Sicily which he visited, were, in general, handsome, and reputed very susceptible of the tender passions; a happy disposition, which they

* The preservation of these bodies is ensured, by drying them before a slow fire, in such a manner as to consume the flesh, without injuring the skin; when they are thoroughly dried, they are clad in the monastic habit, and set upright upon shelves, in the cave; but as the skin by this process is discoloured, and frequently torn, it is easy to conceive, that this singular collection must present a very hideous spectacle to a stranger.

indisputably derive from the genial influence of their atmosphere.

The pastures are covered with numbers of fine oxen, similar to those of France in the shape of their horns, which are remarkable for their length and regularity of every kind is extremely plentiful, and also caught in great abundance. The shoals are likewise reddened with coral. A great number of boats are employed in the fishery of that valuable production; and the sea may seem destitute of life and animation, as the gulls frequently cut the air in their rapid flight over the ships at anchor, and oppose the whiteness of their plumage to the beautiful blue of the atmosphere, that is but rarely sullied by a single cloud.

Quitting the harbour of Palermo, at midnight, on the 22d of May, the *Atala* proceeded towards a lofty and perpendicular mountain, called San Vitto. Between Palermo and San Vitto, the coast is steep, and intersected by fine, cultivated valleys, which form a contrast to the sterility of the neighbouring mountains. There is deep water along the coast, and a ship may approach very near to it, without any danger. The seamen then passed between *Mare Favoyanna*, two small islands, whither the king of Naples banishes his state prisoners standing towards Malta, they perceive the extent of the low Sicilian coast, between *Marsella* and *Cape Passaro*; and, in the distance, discovered a chain of lofty mountains, parallel to the coast. The weather was now very fine; the heavens perfectly serene; and the sun glided slowly over the smooth surface

ters, that was scarcely dimpled by the gentle breeze, while the passengers gazed, enraptured, on the surrounding plains, richly embellished by the spontaneous productions of nature, and charmingly diversified by the labours of the husbandman.

On the morning of the 25th, they approached the island of Panteleria, which is tolerably fertile, and contains some inhabitants. It has, however, but one spring of water, and is generally dreaded by mariners, who know, by experience, that ships seldom pass it without encountering an obstinate gale of wind.

Next day they entered the harbour of Malta, which, our author affirms, is one of the finest and most capacious in the universe. The entrance is narrow, and guarded on each side by a strong castle. The fortifications, which defend the port and the city, are truly excellent, and kept in thorough repair. The city of Valette, or the new city, is well built; the roofs of the houses, like those of the oriental nations, are terraced, and the streets are paved with a sort of stone, that is so extremely white, as to dazzle the eyes, when reflecting the rays of the sun. The palace of the grand master is a spacious building, equally remarkable for its exterior and interior graceful simplicity.

The order of Malta are possessed of a public library, that is apparently increasing with great rapidity. This library contains several specimens of natural history, among which is a petrified bone, of considerable size. At Malta it was supposed to be a piece of petrified wood; but our author convinced several persons of their mistake, and clearly demonstrated, that it was a fragment of the femur of some large quadruped.

A still richer cabinet of curiosities was discovered by Sonnini, in the possession of M. Barbaroux, which contained some choice, curious petrifications; valuable medals; a large figured pearl, a beautiful enamelled head, in chiara oscuro; and a large crystal medallion, engraved by Michael Angelo.

Walking is not here a degradation, as in the noisy city of Palermo. The grand master alone possesses a coach and six horses; and even this is seldom used for any other purpose than to carry him to his country house. Officers of the order, and other inhabitants, keep chaises, for the same purpose, drawn by a single mule, and led along by a man, in order to prevent any accident to the humble, but careful, citizen, who is necessitated to traverse the streets on foot. Of the knights of Malta, Sonnini observes, that all the members of the order, with whom he had any connection, were only remarkable for the great amenity of their manners and the abundance of their civilities.

At the distance of three miles from the new city is the old one, called Citta Vecchia. It is the episcopal residence, and is embellished with a fine cathedral, ornamented with an abundance of green and yellow antique marble, and the interior is completely hung with crimson damask, trimmed with a broad gold lace. From the top of the spire, Mount Etna is clearly discoverable, though situated at the distance of two hundred miles.

In the vicinity of this church is a small grotto, which contains an excellent statue of St. Paul, and the inner surface of the roof is covered with a white lichen.

In the environs of the old city are large caverns, divided into such numerous ramifications, that it has been found necessary to block up the entrance of some of the subterraneous galleries, as they really formed a labyrinth, in which any person might have lost himself, and perished for want of assistance. They were formerly used as places of sepulture, and still retain the name of catacombs. On each side are various stone tombs, placed one above another, and some of them are covered with a convex lid. They seem also to have served as places of retreat to the Maltese, when their island was laid waste by the cruel scourge of war.

The island of Malta is situated almost centrally between Africa and Sicily, in the Mediterranean sea. Its extreme length is about twenty-one miles and its breadth twelve. Properly speaking, it is no other than a rock, almost entirely bare; but its substance is a white, calcareous stone, of a loose texture, little solidity, and not repugnant to vegetation. The contemplative traveller, however, cannot refrain from admiring the industry of the Maltese, who, by dint of labour and perseverance, have contrived to clothe a rock (which in the best part is only covered with a few inches of earth) with the charming and varied productions of Ceres and Pomona. In order to effect this, they are obliged to excavate and beat the rock into pieces: one portion is then reduced by the labourers into minute parts, and mixed with a thin layer of mould, which they occasionally fetch from Sicily, while the fragments, that were nearest the surface, serve to inclose the field with a dry wall, to prevent the rain from carrying away the vegeta-
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tive earth. This method is generally successful, and the mixture proves so fertile, that corn, millet, and annual cotton, are sown to great advantage; fig and other fruit trees thrive remarkably well upon it, and it produces those oranges, that are universally known, and justly esteemed, in most parts of Europe, for the richness of their pulp and their delightful flavour. Yet, notwithstanding all the painful labours of the Maltese, and their unwearied attention to agriculture, it must be acknowledged, that their country is by no means pleasant. The eye is fatigued by the uncouth appearance of numerous walls, white stones, and a dry, yellow soil, rarely spotted with trees or verdure; and even those parts, that are diversified with the various crops of the earth, assume a cheerless aspect, as being too visibly the effect of art unassisted by the gifts of nature.

A large garden, that was laying out at St. Antonio, belonging to the grand master, at the distance of a mile and a half from the town, is mentioned by Sonnini as one of the most surprising efforts of Maltese industry: it abounds with a fine double poppy, a beautiful kind of scabious, and other flowers; and is consequently a miracle, in such a country as we have already described; though, on a different soil, it would be deemed but a very indifferent garden. The walks were entirely covered with fragments of white stone, and were of course disgusting to the eye and unpleasant to the feet. The grand master gave a grand entertainment to the travellers, at this country house. In town, no person was allowed to eat with this petty prince; and, even here, it was only some particular persons who were admitted to that honour. After dinner, however, he laid aside all
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refraints, and mixed, with evident good humour, among the company.

The territory of Malta is by no means sufficient for the support of its inhabitants; but, on the contrary, the greatest part of the corn, cattle, and all other necessaries of life, are brought from Sicily, which may be justly termed, the market and granary of the Maltese. The vessels, employed for the conveyance of provisions, are accounted the fastest sailers in the world, and are generally navigated by the best and the most courageous mariners.

Various kinds of fish are found near the coast of Malta, among which the accola, or white tunny, is held in the highest estimation: it is smaller than the common tunny, but its flesh is whiter and more delicate. There is likewise a fishery of coral and of several kinds of shell fish, as the datoli, the pinnæ, the spiny oyster, the tathys, tellinæ, whelks, &c. The paper nautilus is sometimes met with, but is sufficiently rare, to be accounted a curiosity.

During the twelve days that were spent by our author at Malta, the wind was strong and changeable, the sea was extremely rough, and it rained without intermission, though he was credibly informed, that it had never been known to rain, in the month of June, for the course of forty years. The inhabitants were naturally amazed at such extraordinary weather, and the gallies of the order were brought back into the harbour. They were literally encumbered with people; the admiral's galley alone carrying eight hundred men. Their decorations were superb, consisting of a profusion of carved work, richly gilt; their large sails were striped

blue and white, with a large cross of Malta, painted in the centre; their elegant flags waved in the air with peculiar majesty; and, when under sail, every thing concurred to make them a splendid spectacle. They were, indeed, chiefly preserved, by the order, as a vestige of its ancient magnificence, as their construction rendered them equally unfit for an engagement, or to encounter a violent storm.

As the island of Malta had passed successively through the hands of several nations, before it became the domain of the hospitalers of St. John of Jerusalem, who afterwards exchanged that humble title for the appellation of knights; remains of antiquity are commonly found; and there are persons who boldly assert, that the Maltese language is still more ancient than the greater part of these ruins. It has indeed long been supposed a base compound of Arabic and Italian, but a learned native has recently demonstrated, that the Maltese may vie with the most copious of the living languages.

On the 7th of June, our author and his associates sailed from the harbour of Malta, and, on the 12th, came within sight of the island of Cerigo, the ancient Cythera, situated at the entrance of the Archipelago of the Levant: they also observed, at a small distance, four steril, lofty, and desolate rocks; and, on the following day, cast anchor in the deep bay of La Suda, in the island of Candia, from whence they sailed towards the low and sandy coast of Egypt, and, after a passage of a few days, arrived safely at Alexandria.

It may be easily conceived that a city, planned by the command of an Alexander, and designed by a Dinocrates, must have been origi-

magnificent. It was also embellished, by some of the Egyptian kings, with admirable establishments; and its commerce was, at one time, confessedly, the greatest of any place on the face of the earth; but, on the introduction of luxury, elegant amusement degenerated into licentiousness; public morals were gradually contaminated; and Alexandria fell a victim to the follies of its own inhabitants, and a dreadful example to the surrounding nations.

It is now impossible to view the remains of this once great and justly-famous city, without emotions of the deepest regret. Monuments, that once appeared to mock the ravages of time, are now sadly mutilated and mingled with common rubbish; the immense library of the Ptolemies has fallen a prey to the devouring flames; the ancient Pharos lies buried in the sea, without even any certain indication of the site on which it stood; and Alexandria itself now occupies so small a portion of the space originally inclosed, by order of the celebrated conqueror, that it may in fact be said to be dwindled away to a modern town, that can boast no other antiquities than the numerous ruins that are scattered around it. The arts, the sciences, the genius of the people, and commerce itself, is so dreadfully shrunk and diminished, that Sonnini affirms, "if a writer were not supported by the ruins of a city; formerly so magnificent, he never would have the courage to speak of the one which now exists."

The latitude of Alexandria has been given by Chazelle, of the academy of sciences at Paris, as 31 deg. 11. min. 20 sec. Its longitude is 47 deg. 56 min. 33 sec. The new city is chiefly erected upon the sea-shore, the streets are narrow, unpav-

ed, and irregular. The roofs of the houses are universally terraced, and the apertures, that serve as windows, are almost blocked up by wooden lattices, which project in various forms, and are so close as scarcely to admit the light. By this invention, the habitations of the citizens are literally converted into prisons, where beauty languishes beneath contempt and outrage, instead of receiving that ardent and delicate homage which nature intended it should receive from every generous and sensible heart.

The confused assemblage of men, of different nations, that are constantly seen crowding the streets, in apparent haste and agitation, presents a singular mixture of dresses and manners to a contemplative spectator, who might be easily led to suppose, from their loud tone of voice, distorted features, and violent gestures, that they actually intended to destroy each other, when they are only cheapening some article of traffic, after their accustomed manner. From this remark, it is easy to imagine what dreadful excesses such persons are capable of, who, on the most common occasion, bear the semblance of furies. When they are really incensed, and their minds equally agitated with their bodies, they abandon themselves to the most ungovernable passion, and really resemble those terrific beasts of prey, which spread death and desolation over the arid and sanguined desert.

Cruel and revengeful in their disposition, the Egyptians are never contented with even the most ample satisfaction, unless they stain their hands with the blood of him, whom they have declared their enemy. They indeed conceal their animosity for a considerable time, if a.

nity does immediately offer, for their diabolical purpose; but the effects of their malice are finally sure, and terribly irrational. If, for instance, a Frank has by any means provoked them, they wreak their revenge indiscriminately upon every European who comes within their power, and thus deprive themselves of their only possible excuse, and render their revenge a glaring act of atrocity.

The Arabic language is in general use at Alexandria, and in all other parts of Egypt; but such of the citizens as have any commercial intercourse with Europeans, speak the Italian, which has considerable currency in all the ports of the Levant.

A profusion of sand, dust, and rubbish, constitutes an abode well adapted to the present Alexandrians, whose ignorance still serves to augment the desolation. Prostrate or insulated columns, broken statues, dispersed capitals, entablatures, and fragments of various kinds are completely strewed over the environs of the city, which now may be justly styled a hideous theatre of the most horrible destruction. Afflicted at the sight of fallen grandeur and contemned magnificence, the generous traveller sighs with regret over the numerous ruins, and burns with a laudable indignation against a barbarous race, whose sacrilegious hands have wantonly destroyed many monuments, which even the corroding tooth of time would hitherto have spared.

The present enclosure of Alexandria consists of solid walls, and a hundred vaulted towers, the circumference of which is only six miles, whereas, *the ancient city, according to the best authorities, was nearly twenty-four miles round.* The architectur

are is evidently in the manner of the Arabians, and other fragments of antique monuments, have been employed in their construction. Several inscriptions, on the towers, in Arabic and Kufic characters, fully substantiate the origin of their origin.

Near the coast, and towards the eastern extremity of the crescent, formed by the new pier stand two obelisks, called Cleopatra's needles. One of them still retains its original position, the other is thrown from its base, and almost buried in the sand. Our author was not able, at the time of his visit, to take their dimensions, but one of his countrymen, who seems to have measured them with equal care and exactness, asserts, that they are fifty-eight feet six inches high, and seven feet square at the base, according to the French measure, of which, our reader may observe, the French foot is to the English nearly the same proportion as 16 to 15.

They are hewn out of a single block of granite, and completely covered with hieroglyphics.

At a small distance from these obelisks the place of the Egyptian monarchs once raised their magnificent head, and many superb vestiges of original grandeur are still discernible. They now yield an abundance of granite and marble to the worthless citizens, who constantly employ them in the construction of their own houses and other materials. Medals, and other coins, were formerly found on this spot with great facility; but, owing to the reiterated ravages of Europeans, they are now become scarce.

Without the south gate of the wall, the column that was ever raised, still

head, triumphant over ignorance, time, and blind superstition. It is composed of three pieces of beautiful granite, out of which are hewn the pedestal, the shaft, and capital. Its height is about ninety-five feet, and the mean diameter is seven feet and three quarters; consequently the solid contents of the column may be computed at six thousand cubic feet; and, as it is a well-known fact, that one cubic foot of red granite weighs a hundred and eighty-five pounds, its weight must be equivalent to one million one hundred and ten thousand pounds avoirdupois.

The ground upon which this pillar stands having sunk, a part of the plinth that sustains it, is exposed to view. It is a granite block, of only six feet square, on which rests a pedestal of much larger dimensions than itself; a fact which sufficiently proves the exact perpendicularity of the whole erection.

It seems extremely probable, from a large circular hollow that has been discovered in its upper part, by some persons who contrived to ascend thither for the satisfaction of their curiosity, that the capital originally served as a base to some statue, the remains of which are now, in all likelihood, irrecoverably lost. A native of France informed our author, that he had discovered some fragments of a statue near the pillar, which seemed to have been of a prodigious size; but, finding his labour fruitless in searching for the remainder, he had thrown them into the sea at a certain part, where they were seen by Soncini, but so obscured by the sand, that he could not possibly make out what they were. His informer asserted, that the fragments were of the *finest porphyry*.

Thoug

SONNINI'S TRAVELS

though various and numerous conjectures have been frequently started, and still exist, concerning the time and motives of the erection of the famous Alexandrian column, it would be difficult to change the appellation so long affixed, and which it will probably retain through succeeding ages, viz. Pompey's Pillar. Some indeed boldly affirm, that it was raised by Cæsar, in commemoration of the great victory over Pompey at Pharsalia; others, that it was a monument of gratitude of the Alexandrians towards the Roman emperor, Alexander Severus; and a third class attribute its elevation to the commands of Ptolemy Evergetus, one of the kings of Egypt; while our author seems inclined to attribute the honour of its erection to those ancient monarchs, which produced so many Egyptian prodigies, when thousands of men were employed several years in the conveyance of masses of stone, the very moving of which seemed to mock the greatest exertion of human strength.

To the southward of Pompey's pillar, is a deep, fertile, and spacious valley, called Giurgé, by the natives. It contains some fragments of ancient buildings, several detached parts of granite columns, and a cave, into which, however, it is impossible now to enter. The next place worthy notice is the kalish, or canal of Alexandria.

At the time of the Egyptian kings, the city was not surrounded with that sterile waste, which the present renders its environs disgusting; but, on the contrary, it was refreshed with a salutary breeze, and the surrounding soil was fertilized by the lake Marcotis, and two large canals, one descending from Upper Egypt, and the other coming from a branch of

the Bolbitic. These useful and agreeable works were kept in tolerable repair, under the government of the caliphs, but the rage of the Turks for destruction has dried up those charming reservoirs, so that nothing now remains but the canal of Lower Egypt, and even that is in a ruinous condition. It has three bridges over it, of modern construction and during the inundation, it receives the waters of the Nile at Latf, opposite Fouah.

At a small distance, by the sea-side, is the entrance of the subterraneous aqueduct, that conveys the water of the Alexandrians into their cisterns, the arches of which supported the whole extent of the ancient city, and formed one of the most beautiful monuments in the world. It was by so easy a method of communication, that merchandise was formerly conveyed through Egypt. The perils of the sea were thus eluded, and the dangerous passage of the mouth of the Nile was avoided, with equal facility. Yet, notwithstanding such evident and inestimable advantages, this canal has been stupidly neglected, by an ignorant and barbarous people. The walls that sustained the banks were, at the period of our author's visit, dropping to decay; the stream itself was impassable for boats, and seemed to threaten the citizens with a total want of water; in which case, modern Alexandria might have sunk amidst the surrounding ruins, and have become a prey to the savage animals that frequently prowl around its walls, and fill the evening air with their horrid cries.

The banks of the canal are enlivened by a few trees and shrubs, and in some places they are clothed with occasional patches of verdure, which

ther a number of small birds usually resort, among which our traveller remarked the fig-pecker, the sky-lark, and an abundance of sparrows. Those of the former descriptions are only birds of passage at Alexandria, but the sparrows, like those of Europe, are equally remarkable for effrontery, familiarity, and voracity, seemingly determined to partake, at all events, of the dwellings and provisions of the natives. Exclusive of a few fields, where barley is sown, and where artichokes and other vegetables are cultivated, the adjacent country presents nothing to the spectator but rocks, sands, and general sterility. The cultivation was formerly much larger, and might have been still extended with the greatest facility by the Alexandrians, but that ignorant and inactive race, who made no effort to preserve the only water that was potable, could not be expected to make any exertion to procure to themselves either comfort or abundance.

In the vicinity of the canal are long subterraneous galleries, hewn out of the rock, and distinguished by the name of the Catacombs. In all probability they were originally the quarries, from whence the stones were extracted for the construction of the city, and were then set apart for the purpose of sepulture. Most of the passages have fallen in, but a few of them served to satisfy our author's curiosity, who discovered on each side the interior, three rows of tombs, placed one above the other. At the extremity of some of the galleries, there are separate chambers, with their peculiar tombs, most probably designed for the interment of some particular family, or class of citizens. The Arabs confidently affirm, that these catacombs have a communication with
pyr.

pyramids of Memphis. This assertion, however, is not readily believed by our author, as he confesses such a vast extent appears exaggerated. It is indeed a well known fact, that they reach as far as the sea at the head of the old port, where three excavations in the rock, honoured by the Egyptians with the appellation of Cleopatra's baths, seem to be a continuation of them.

During his residence at Alexandria, Sonnini lodged at the French factory, which he describes as a quadrangular building, situated at the head of the new port, and enclosing a large court-yard, round which are the warehouses, under arcades: the latter are supported by fragments of pillars, taken from the ruins of the ancient city. Several are of granite, and one is of porphyry. In the midst of the yard is a statue, of white stone, representing a woman with a child by her side; the sculpture is tolerably good, and the drapery in particular is well executed; but it has received many and frequent injuries from the bales of merchandise that are continually tossing about, and sometimes fall upon it with such force as to mutilate it. The apartments are built over the warehouses, consequently the windows are at a considerable height from the ground. The only avenue to this spacious enclosure, is shut up by a single gate of great solidity, and in times of tumult, bales of goods are usually piled up against it, as a farther security. If, however, the insurrection be not easily appeased, and the least fear is entertained of the populace breaking in, all the merchants contrive to slip from the windows *

* Sonnini had one day an opportunity of witnessing the extreme terror, with which the bare idea of an Alexandrian riot filled the souls of the Gallic merchants. A per-
son

in the course of the night, and to take board of some vessel in the harbour.

Having heard of a curious antique monument that was in a mosque, without the wall of the city, our author expressed a wish to see it. On the intimation of his desire, he received the strongest assurances that it was impossible. He, however, contrived to bribe the inmates of the mosque, and, by his connivance, had an opportunity of examining the edifice, and its situation at his leisure. The mosque itself is very ancient; the walls are encrusted with marbles of various colours, and some beautiful pieces of mosaic. He repaid the trouble of our adventurer by satisfying his curiosity. The tomb, which was the immediate object of his research, is probably one of the finest pieces of antiquity in Egypt. It is very large, and would be an oblong square, but not one of its sides rounded off in the manner of a bathing-tub. It is formed of one piece of green and spotted marble, elegantly diversified with green, yellow, and red, and is covered with a great profusion of hieroglyphics, that would, in all probability, be too short to admit of their being faithfully copied. The cistern is now used by the Mahometans as a reservoir, to contain water for their religious ablutions.

son happening to say, that an Egyptian was slain of Europe, the gates of the factory were hastily of goods ordered to be moved, in order to suspected shock, and all the inmates of the factory paring to escape to the harbour, by dropping windows; when they were happily informed one Mahometan who had killed another.

It seems that a continual communication with the various nations of Europe has, in some degree, disposed the Alexandrians to more toleration, in some particulars, than the rest of the Egyptians; as for instance, Europeans are by them permitted, as well as by the inhabitants of Rosetta, to wear their native dresses, while in every other part of Egypt they are forbidden to appear, without being clad in the oriental fashion. This indulgence, however, must by no means be abused; for if the Europeans venture to show themselves in any number, or with any degree of parade, at a distance from the shipping, they instantly draw upon themselves the insults of the populace.

It is a remarkable fact that, notwithstanding the stupid barbarism of a people, who, as we have already observed, have so shamefully neglected, and sometimes destroyed, the most precious relics of antiquity, they still preserve a solemn respect for the name of the illustrious conqueror, whose superb monuments lie scattered around their habitations. "Thou art an *Alexander*," is, in their opinion, the highest encomium upon human valour; so true it is that, when the sculptured marble falls neglected to the dust, and the statue of bronze is confounded with the common ruins of a city, great actions will survive those perishable monuments, and claim an unabated admiration from the children of posterity.

European merchandise is conveyed by water from Alexandria to Cairo, from whence it is sent to all the different parts of Arabia, Upper Egypt, and Abyssinia. The small vessels, used for this purpose, between Alexandria and Rosetta, are denominated germs; generally of about five or six tons burden. Their construction is tolerable, an

mariners never pass it without trembling towards the end of the year 1777, the branch of the Nile was entirely choked the first boats that attempted a passage the danger attending the Rosetta branch likewise to increase greatly every year; irrational to suppose, that the ignorance of the Egyptians should ever contrive to fine the water, and give more depth to the channel.

Among a variety of salt water fishes by the natives on the Alexandrian coast particularly remarked the kind of ray, named the sea eagle; the borito, a species of tunny; the gar fish, the fur mullet, and which formerly occupied a distinguished place upon the tables of the Romans. Our author cured one of these fish, which was thirty inches long; the colour of its body was a deep blue clouded with grey: its head was bluish

the inhabitants, and were saluted, in their passage through the city, with a shower of stones, and much abusive language. At a small distance from the town, a mischance of another kind befel them, as the ass that carried their provisions indignantly upset his panniers, to ease himself of the unpleasant weight, and reduced bottles, plates, pâtés, and every thing to one common mass of ruin. Near half an hour elapsed before the scattered fragments could be collected, and placed upon a horse of a gentler disposition. The travellers were then overtaken by the night, which proved exceedingly dark; they proceeded, however, till they had performed half the journey, when they stopped to take a little rest. When the time came for them to resume their progress, a great uproar and dispute arose concerning the mules, which had been turned loose, and could not now be either found or distinguished with facility. The muleteers soon began to exchange blows; the janizaries beat the contending parties, and a whole hour was lost in this comic scene of confusion, while Sonnini, with an old servant; a bombardier belonging to the navy; and a young draughtsman, had taken the precaution to secure their respective animals, and consequently enjoyed, at their ease, the ludicrous behaviour of their quarrelsome companions. At length, however, the tumult ceased; the signal was given for departure; and, at about six o'clock the next morning they arrived at Rosetta, from whence they set off in the afternoon for Cairo; and after remaining there for a month, *chiefly within doors*, they returned to Alexandria *with the same rapidity as they had performed their excursion.*

The journey from Alexandria to Rosetta is usually taken by night, as the travellers then avoid the inconvenience of an ardent sun; but Sonnini, having been accustomed to hot climates, was able to bear the strongest heat of the solar rays, and was consequently enabled to ascertain many particulars, of which persons of a weaker constitution were obliged to remain ignorant. This journey is usually performed in about twelve hours. As there are no carriages in the country, mules are made use of, which may be hired at different places, on moderate terms. Their pace is a long amble, which is very pleasant to the rider, and they are so well acquainted with the road, though there is no beaten track over the sand, that it is unnecessary to guide them, either by day or night.

On quitting Alexandria, the road lies in an east north-east direction, along the base of a promontory, that stretches out to the northward of the city. The coast is here more elevated than that of the Tower of Arabs, and is agreeably spotted with habitations and patches of verdure. At the point of the promontory stands the town Aboukir, erected on the ruins of the ancient Canopus.

At the distance of eighteen miles from hence are the remains of the Canopic branch of Nile; it is at present, however, only a salt water lagoon, and has no communication with the river, except at the time of its greatest increase. It may commonly be forded with safety, when the depth of the water is augmented, when it must be passed in a boat. The mouth of the ancient branch of the Nile is extremely narrow, and formed by a bank of sand. Upon

ern bank stands a large, square building, constructed upon the same principles as the generality of Egyptian caravanseras; but Sonnini observes, that it is unworthy the name of an inn, bestowed upon it by Corneille le Bruyn, as it merely contains a well of disagreeable water. About a mile and a half further, are discernible upon the coast, in a clear day, some dilapidated walls, and other ruins, which are probably the remains of the ancient Heraclium.

Proceeding along the sea-shore, which is abundantly covered with a variety of shells, and agreeably enlivened by the visits of the sea-lark, the variegated horseman, the curlew, and the dusky ind-piper, travellers arrive at the tomb of a Maometan saint, where they are supplied, by a resident Arab, with coffee and brackish, warm water. The latter, however, proves sufficiently acceptable, after a tedious march over the sands, and the inconvenience of an exposure to the violent heat of the sun. From hence they proceed to a brick tower*, which warns them to quit the beach, and several others of a similar construction occur in their way to Rossetta, as otherwise they might lose themselves upon a moving plain; and so much the more easily, because the city is obscured, on the western side, by accumulated heaps of sand, and consequently does not strike the eye till they arrive at the very entrance of the first street.

The scene then changes, as by enchantment, from hideous, arid plains, and dismal ruins, to a

* Some of the towers are much larger than others, and are not solid, but afford, in their interior, an oratory to the Maometans, and a welcome shelter to exhausted travellers in general.

handsome and populous town, a beautiful series of gardens, and an immense tract of cultivated land, where Nature smiles in her gayest attitude and lavishes her gifts with unexampled profusion. Rosetta is built in a simple, yet agreeable style. On the eastern side it is washed by the majestic Nile, which bears, tranquilly, on its bosom the wealth of many nations, and richly fertilizes the circumjacent country. On the north the city is embellished with a wilderness of aromatic odours; for here the gardens are not divided by regular beds and walks, as in the enclosures of Europe; but, on the contrary, everything seems to grow entirely by chance. The boughs of the orange and the lemon tree are frequently interwoven; the pomegranate hangs from the side of the anona; esculent vegetables flourish beneath the balmy shade, and the lofty palm majestically rises above the surrounding trees. Here fragrant bowers, intersected by wind paths, and rendered still more salubrious by crystal streamlet, that glides between the trees, grove, and kindly diffuses the aliment of vegetation, scarcely admits the penetrating rays of the sun, while the sweet cooing of the turtle seems well adapted to reproach the gloom insensible Turk, who devotes the passing moments amidst this charming retirement, to his pipe and his coffee, ignorant of the exquisite delight of refined love, and too proud to admit the loss of his harem to a participation of his pleasures.

On the opposite side of the river is the plain that has no other boundary but the sea; a beautiful country, sprung from the bosom of the water, where, in the same year, the husbandman rejoices in the luxuriance of

harvest, and a rich display of verdant pastures; where, like the vicinage of Rossetta, the scenery is elegantly diversified with odoriferous groves, clumps of evergreens, and a profusion of vegetables, while the fleecy tenants of the mead roam carelessly over their native soil, and towns, and villages, lakes, canals, and the distant turrets of cities, complete the charms of the matchless landscape.

Rossetta, from the superiority of its houses to those of Cairo, its pleasant situation upon the river, its charming prospects, perfumed groves, and salubrious air, has justly received the appellation of the Garden of Egypt. It is indeed the most agreeable town in that part of the globe. It is the emporium of traffic between Cairo and Alexandria; it diffuses thither motion, life, and comfort, and its own shops are abundantly supplied with all sorts of merchandize, and all the necessities of life, the latter of which may be procured at a very reasonable price. Remote from the noise of sea-ports, and strange to those revolutions which frequently happen at Cairo, the inhabitants are tolerably peaceable, and even an European there experiences much less mortification than at Cairo, or at Alexandria. It is true, indeed, he sometimes encounters a few unpleasant occurrences, which arise from the ridiculous pride and ignorance of the Mussulmen, who suppose themselves the only men who are in the favour of their Creator, and regard all others as dogs and infidels. Indeed the epithets of dog and Christian are accounted so truly synonymous in Egypt, that our author and his companions were often saluted in this brutal manner, by persons who had no intention to insult them. The Jew

of wealth, however unjustly gotten, perfectly insensible to the contempt among them that are so liberally bestowed upon them. In the oriental dress, they are nevertheless wear a particular mark of distinction in their heads and feet, and also to cut their hair in a peculiar manner.

The generality of the merchants are Turks or Syrians; there are indeed some from the coast of Barbary; degenerate descendants of the ancient Egyptians, called Copts; who have settled in the town, and the surrounding plains. The command of Rossetta, at the British arrival, was in the hands of the Mamelukes, who bore the title of

We have already observed, that the amusements of the natives are derived from coffee and tobacco. They may, indeed, be seen to have their pipes in their mouths, whether abroad or at home, on foot or on horseback. The shank of one of their pi

and marbled with different colours. They are generally brought from Turkey, and the reddish clay, of which they are formed, is procured from the neighbourhood of Constantinople. The tobacco bag is also an article of Turkish luxury; this is usually made of filken stuff, richly embroidered, and is suspended from the sash or girdle, that constitutes a part of the oriental habit. The poorer class, to whom the smoking of tobacco seems a call of necessity, make use of common shanks, of reed. Their tobacco has not that acrid taste, which, in the nations of Europe, provokes a continual spitting; nor is it necessary to draw its smoke up strongly, as it almost rises of itself, through the elegant and perfumed tubes that are appropriated to its use; consequently the habit of smoking incessantly, is neither so strange nor disagreeable, as is imagined by the natives of other countries, who are used to short pipes and strong tobacco.

Such of the orientals as are not absolutely obliged to maintain themselves by manual labour, usually enjoy the coolness of their orchards, the rich perfume of their gardens, or the vicinity of the water, by *sitting* with their legs crossed under them. They never walk, unless they have absolute occasion; nor can they be said to know any thing of exercise, except on horseback; for they are extremely fond of riding. An European walking about, either in a room, or in the open air, is to them an object equally curious and incomprehensible. They universally consider his motions either as the result of insanity; or a compliance with the dictates of his medical countrymen, who have prescribed him such an uncommon exercise for the cur

cure of some distemper. Similar ideas are entertained on this subject by the African negroes and the savages of South America, whose vacant minds are never occupied by meditation, and who consequently have no need of such an alleviation from a too intense application.

When the wealthy and indolent Turk has fatiated himself with the sweet warbling of the birds, and the ballamic breeze that plays on the foliage of his garden, he goes to the * coffee house, where he sits in solemn state, with a pipe in one hand and a dish of coffee in the other, whilst merry andrews, female dancers, and story-tellers attempt, by turns, to captivate his attention, and to procure a few pieces of money. But little conversation is carried on among the company, as the natural pride and reserve of the Turk incite him to treat other people with the most profound contempt. The African indeed is more loquacious, but he wishes to ape the manners of the Turk. and those who are not Mahometans, endeavour to secure their personal safety, by the most abject submission to the inclination of their tyrants.

If a person has any acquaintance with the inhabitants of Rossetta, he can hardly pass through a single street, without being solicited to enter some house, and take coffee; "this politeness," says Sonnini, "is so habitual, that even those who have not a grain of coffee in their possession, never fail to make the offer, though they would

* These are places filled with smoke, but destitute of any decoration; nor can the company procure any thing but coffee, and burning charcoal, for the purpose of lighting their pipes.

be much embarrassed were it accepted." The coffee berries are here roasted in an earthen pan, and then pounded in a mortar, by which preparation their flavour is preserved much better than by reducing them to powder in a mill. According to the Egyptian connoisseurs, forty berries are requisite to make a cup.

The women, who are secluded from the world and its enjoyments, in the harem of a Mameluke, Turk, or other wealthy inhabitant, are not Egyptians, but were formerly brought from those parts of Greece, where beauty is a regular and valuable article of commerce. Their natural charms are carefully preserved from the ardent rays of the sun, and the ill effects of a saline air, yet their beauty languishes beneath the suspicion and barbarities of a jealous tyrant, and their minds are consequently tormented with perpetual uneasiness. An insurmountable line of separation is indeed apparently drawn between the two halves of mankind in the oriental countries; as the graces of the softer sex, admirably contrasted by nature with the strength and manly beauties of the other, are here exclusively possessed by a few illiberal wretches, who will not permit any other man either to introduce himself into their company, or even to address them, if they chance to walk beyond the limits of their prison, without avenging the supposed insult, by the sacrifice of the offender. The unhappy captives are indeed solicitous to break some links of their galling chain, and they have been frequently known to make the first advances, but such intrigues are attended with extreme danger; *not can their assignations be possibly kept without a conscious fear of the most tragic consequences.*


Dario

During our author's first stay at Cairo, he came one day, by chance, upon a young Frenchman, who was employed in making a variety of signs, behind the half-drawn curtains of a window, in the consul's house, to a woman who resided on the opposite side of the canal, and who answered his silent, but expressive, motions through a wooden lattice, though at the distance of more than sixty feet. Sonnini obtained permission to witness this curious conversation, and was soon afterwards a perfect master of the art, which he at first viewed with admiration. The young man then quitted Cairo, and our traveller, understanding that their conferences had been repeated several times a day, at stated hours, presented himself at the window, in place of his absent instructor, and gave the lady to understand that, being his countryman, he came to express the same sentiments, and to offer her the same homage. Sonnini, however, was soon tired of extending his wishes to a person whose beauty might possibly be imaginary, and, therefore, requested her to exhibit herself more completely to his view. This proposal caused her to make some difficulties, but they were all vanquished by the energetic persuasions of her admirer, and she promised to ascend upon the terrace of her house, towards the evening. Sonnini was true to the hour of appointment, and saw a woman elegantly dressed, but she wore her veil, which entirely concealed her face, and excited his vexation still more than the lattice of her window. He petitioned, in the most urgent manner, that this intrusive article of dress might be removed, and a black female, who accompanied the lady, joined her exhortations to his entreaties; but their unit-

ed efforts were all in vain, as, among these women, it is accounted the *greatest* of favours to unveil, and, by a singular kind of modesty, they would rather suffer their whole body to be seen than to show their face. Next day, however, the solicitations of the European were renewed with more success, as the officious negro girl, who was indisputably acquainted with the inclinations of her mistress, snatched away the veil, and discovered a young and pretty woman, whose cheeks were overspread with the carnation tint of bashfulness, which, however, softened by degrees, and finally relinquished its seat to the native roses of feminine beauty.

From that moment the greatest freedom reigned in their interviews, and Sonnini was soon invited to the house, with many assurances of safety, and was given to understand that the husband of his inamorato, who was an old Turkish merchant, would be absent for some time. The serious consequences which might probably attend his compliance, now presented themselves to his view, and he began to make difficulties which the most loving entreaties and the most affectionate promises could not overcome. Several evenings passed away in the contest between the eloquent invitations of a tender passion and a prudential, though often feeble, resistance, till at length the fruitless interviews were ended by the discharge of a musquet from one of the neighbouring terraces, that convinced our author of his personal danger, and made him feel how wisely he had acted, in not attempting to cross the canal.

It is not enough for the opulent Mahometans, that their ladies are endowed with the most exquisite beauties of nature, but their splendour
must



large, black eyes, females, of every fair and description, dye their eye-brows with a luted ore of lead, called alquifoux. Reduced to a powder, and mixed with the vapour of a lamp, and with this colour they paint their eye-brows and eye-lashes also blacken their lashes with a small resin, an operation admirably described by Juvenal in his satire on the Roman ladies. The high priests of the Egyptians employ the fumes of incense or some other odoriferous and oily substance to keep their valuable drug, ready for use in vials.

Another fashion, equally general and common to Egyptian beauty, requires that the nails should be dyed red; and so universal the adoption of this custom, that any person who should hesitate to conform to it, would be considered of indecorum. Whatever may be the opinion, whether of Mahometan, Jewish,

that the colour should not take every where, the fair artists wrap them round with thread, leaving intermediate spaces, before they apply it, so that, when the operation is finished, their fingers are fancifully marked, in a spiral direction, with little, orange-coloured stripes. Some of the Syrian women are partial to the mixture of black and white, and accordingly change their original dye to black, by a composition of sal ammoniac, lime, and honey.

A soft, smooth skin, free from any appearance of roughness, is, either through motives of self-love, or an ardent thirst of exciting admiration, one of the particular objects of desire in the Egyptian ladies. Every part of their body is polished with equal care; and, if nature errs, in furnishing the faces of any of the women with beards, they remove them effectually by an application of boiled honey and turpentine, or some particular gum, which is permitted to dry, and is then removed with all that adheres to it. This process is certainly extremely painful; but there is, fortunately, no occasion to recur frequently to the remedy, as it either produces a complete eradication, or, if a new growth appears, it is merely a light, soft down, and may be removed with facility.

The taste of the men in the eastern countries is well known to be widely different from that of Europeans, with respect to their women; as, with them, extreme corpulence is accounted the greatest trait of beauty. It is, therefore, natural to suppose, that the females themselves are anxious to acquire some degree of superiority in this particular. They, accordingly, use a kind of conserve of cocoa-nuts, or the bulbs of the hermodactylus.

modactylus officinalis, grated and mixed with gar. Of this composition they use a large quantity, after any weakening illness, as it is supposed admirably adapted to the restoration of their strength and vigour, which is so delightful to their appetites.

It is but justice to add, that, among the nations of the earth, there are no who pay a more rigid attention to cleanliness than these orientals. Their thoughts are occupied by the use of the bath, the use of perfumes, and of every thing that has a tendency to soften and beautify the flesh. The most minute details succeed each other with astonishing exactness, and they are well prepared for the reparation of the ravages of time, says our author, "which has its principal secret in a great variety of practical receipts."

In Rosetta, and its environs, exist many wild animals, which nature seems to have destined for the peculiar service of man, though the absurd prejudice, founded on a religion so ridiculous, the Mussulmen carefully avoid, as unclean beasts, and dare not touch. Under penalty of becoming themselves unclean. Hence a proper idea may be formed of the estimation of the dog, with which these conceited zealots regard the European. Widely different is this practice of the ancient Egyptians, who paid peculiar honours to the dog, as being faithful and intelligent of animals; and generally have these quadrupeds been considered worthy of associating with man, in all countries among all people, except the blind followers of the great impostor, that even the faithful hardly associate with each other, keep

cheerfully share with them the fatigues and the produce of the chase.

By a strange contradiction, which, to any other people than Mahometans, would be altogether incomprehensible, there are few places on the face of the globe that contain so many dogs as the towns of Egypt, or at least they *appear* there in greater numbers than in any other nation, as their only habitation is the street, where they subsist on whatever food they can pick up by chance, at the doors of the houses, or among the filth of the receptacles for offal. Always liable to the blows of passengers, and sometimes to be butchered by an armed and ferocious mob, they, nevertheless, endeavour to render their best services to the barbarians, among whom they live, and, while their lean, wretched, and unhealthy appearance excites the compassion of every generous foreigner, their shameful treatment is sufficient to force a malediction from the lips of the most gentle, against the savage sons of ignorance and superstition, who are the sole authors of such piteous misfortunes.

The Egyptian dogs are large greyhounds, which would be exceedingly handsome, if they were treated with less severity; however, their instinct is not destroyed, though they have entirely lost the native elegance of their formation. They are seen passing to and fro, in the most frequented streets, and carefully avoiding the Mahometan passenger, who turns aside his robe at their approach. During the night, they assume a superintendence over the wharfs, boats, and timber, which no person confides to them, and a robber would find it impossible to touch the property, of which they thus become the voluntary guardians.

guardians. But what seems still more curious is, that these animals form distinct tribes, and have limits which they never exceed: they never quit the quarter where they first received their existence, and if a strange dog should presume to enter their confines, his life would most probably answer for his intrusion.

The Bedouins, who are much less addicted to superstition than the Turks, keep large greyhounds, for the preservation of their tents and goods; but, instead of treating them with the shameful cruelty of barbarians, they are particularly careful of them, and bear them so great an affection, that any person, who should attempt to kill one of them, would undoubtedly fall a sacrifice to the resentment of the owner.

Notwithstanding their decided and unjust aversion for dogs, which have justly constituted the symbol of unalterable attachment and fidelity, the Turks are extremely fond of cats*, inasmuch that, if one of them happens to enter a mosque, it is greatly caressed by the assembled zealots, as the favourite animal of their prophet, and the enemy of other troublesome creatures; whereas, if a dog should unluckily make his appearance at the same place, his presence would be considered as the most dreadful contamination, and he would be inevitably punished with instant death.

Among the ancient Egyptians, cats were greatly venerated, and their death was considered as so

* Nothing more was requisite to bring these animals into high estimation, than an old tradition, which affirms that Mahomet, being once called upon some urgent business, preferred cutting off the sleeve of his robe, to disturbing his cat, that lay upon it fast asleep.

mournful an event, that their owners shaved their eye-lids, in token of their mourning ; the bodies of the animals were likewise embalmed in the sacred temples, and from thence carried, solemnly, into Bubastis, a considerable city in Lower Egypt, where they were deposited in the sepulchres of the country.

There are cats in all the houses of Egypt. In those of the opulent, they are indulged in the best apartments, and partake of the indolence and effeminacy of their masters, who lavish upon them such caresses, as their pride would refuse to beings of superior sense.

In the hot climates of those countries, which have been covered with colonies and flocks, from periods far too remote to be ascertained with any precision, are reared the most gentle and docile animals of their species, while in the desert parts of the same countries, such animals retain their native and original ferocity. The horse, which scours along the plain with surprising rapidity, while his sparkling eyes, his mouth white with foam, and his large nostrils, that are scarcely sufficient for the egress of his checked and burning breath, claims the admiration of the spectator, and proves his participation in the ardour of the warrior, whom he carries to the midst of embattled hosts, is nevertheless extremely gentle in his disposition. The buffalo, scarcely taken from his native wilds, and still bearing the aspect of terrific fierceness, is as tractable as an European ox, and is so perfectly harmless, that a child may safely venture to conduct a numerous drove.

This characteristic gentleness, however, must by no means be ascribed to the nature of the soil and food, the temperature of the climate, nor ?
nature

natural indolence, which is observable in the sultry, but wet, regions of South America. On the contrary, it results entirely from the indolence of the men who inhabit those countries, and who have found means to turn the labour of useful animals to the greatest advantage.

As the itinerant nations, who have occupied a considerable part of Egypt, possess no other property than their flocks and herds, their attention is consequently engrossed by their herds, directed towards their welfare and protection. They neither despise nor forsake them, but permit them to live with themselves, and their families, in their wanderings and little excursions, to the spot they may chuse for their temporary residence. The dromedary, after grazing during the day, comes, of his own accord, in the evening, to repose in safety, before his tent; and the same enclosure yields a comfortable accommodation to the Bedouin and his family, a mare, a ewe, and several goats, which live together without the least discontent, or disturbance. From so familiar a intercourse with man, and the animals that are subjugated to his dominion, it is not at all surprising that the latter should prove so remarkably docile, and as the Bedouins usually furnish the other inhabitants of the country, the reason may be assigned for the docility of all domestic animals in Egypt, is sufficiently an excuse for a farther continuation of the subject.

Among the small number of oxen remaining in Egypt, it would be in vain to look for vestiges of that beauty, which they once possessed in former times, when the

dered as gods, by the ancient Egyptians, and universally worshipped with the most profound reverence. Heifers were then never slaughtered, but the law pronounced that person guilty of sacrilege, who presumed to eat their flesh. Common oxen, when they chanced to die, were committed to the grave with solemn funeral rites; and those which had devoted their strength and youth to the labours of the field, were not permitted to be killed, but, on the contrary, were suffered to graze at pleasure on the pastures, during the remainder of their lives, as a just compensation for their important services.

The Egyptian breed is still tolerably handsome; but it may be naturally supposed that, being long neglected, it is much degenerated; their horses are generally small, and of a deep fawn colour, and their flesh, in point of flavour, is greatly inferior to that which is eaten in Europe. Indeed it is a general observation of travellers, that the flesh of animals, in very hot regions, is neither so nutritious nor palatable, as that of animals of the same species, fed in cold or temperate countries. Veal, for instance, which in European climates affords a delicate and wholesome article of food, is, in Egypt, remarkable for flaccidity and insipidity. This remark seems to have been made by our author, in some parts of South America, where the flesh of the calves is so extremely flabby, at the age in which those of Europe are delivered to the butcher, that it cannot possibly be eaten, till the animals would be styled oxen, by the natives of any other country. Veal is never served up to the Egyptian tables, as it is expressly forbidden by Mahomet;
and

and the Copts, who have adopted a servile imitation of their rulers, alike abstain from its use.

The oxen are employed in tillage, which, in Egypt, requires but little exertion. Great numbers of them are likewise employed in the rice mills at Rossetta and Damietta. They are consequently dear, and, notwithstanding the rich supply of the adjacent pasturage, Sonnini affirms, that, at the time of his visit, they commonly sold for the enormous sum of two hundred and fifty thousand livres a head. These animals, when harnessed, have their head at liberty, as the yoke is adjusted in such a manner as they may pull from the pitch of the shoulders. By this method they are more at ease, and have much more command of their strength than when they are in the wearisome and inconvenient attitude of drawing by the head. To this method may be ascribed the size of their withers, which is much greater than in the oxen of other countries, though it is not improbable that the swelling is in some degree natural, and that, in this respect, they may be said to approximate to the species of bison, or bunched ox.

An animal, that might be added to those already domesticated by the Egyptians, is the ichneumon. It was one of the objects of worship in ancient Egypt. Treated with particular care during its life, and highly honoured after its death, it was the supposed protector of the most singular country in the world, against a scourge the most dreadful to an agricultural people. *Much has therefore been written, and many fabulous stories related of this quadruped, both by ancients and moderns, which have been occasionally copied in the historic page of successive tra-*
vells

vellers. Sonnini, however, had an opportunity of observing the ichneumon in its native country, and in a state of liberty; he has therefore given the following account of the animal, and endeavoured to ascertain the extent of its usefulness, by reducing its boasted and exaggerated services to their just value.

With strong dispositions to familiarity, the ichneumon is not reared in the houses of the Egyptians, nor do they remember it having been so brought up by their ancestors. Similar in its habits to the weasel and polecat, this quadruped feeds promiscuously upon rats, birds, and reptiles. A natural fondness for eggs induces it frequently to rake up the sand, in search of those deposited there by the crocodiles, and thus it, in some degree, prevents the too great propagation of those hateful animals; though the antipathy erroneously attributed to the ichneumon, against the crocodile, is really an innate sentiment in a species of tortoise of the Nile, which attacks and devours the young crocodiles as soon as they are hatched, and is thus successfully employed in their destruction, while the ichneumon receives the sole honour of a perpetual and desperate war, said to subsist between them; yet the tortoise, known to the Arabs by the name of *cersé*, and called *thirsé* by the Egyptians, has a much better title to the applause and admiration of writers, who merely contemplate it as an animal, to which Egypt is indebted for the most sensible diminution of a species of reptile, whose hideous form and ferocious disposition are equally calculated to inspire sentiments of disgust and horror.

ans have for the marten, or pole-cat.

Among several branches of commerce peculiar to Rossetta, is the exportation of rice, which is sown in Lower Egypt, from the end of March to that of May. During the inundation of the Nile, the fields are completely covered with water; and small dikes, or raised banks, are thrown up round each field, to prevent it from running off. Fresh supplies of water are likewise conducted thither by trenches, and the ground is so thoroughly moistened that, in some places, a person might sink in half way down his chin. In order to make the rice thrive, it must be constantly watered. It is not ready for harvest six months before it comes to maturity; and is usually cut down by the middle of November. To separate the grain from the straw, the Egyptians, who are unacquainted with the use of the flail, prepare, with a mixture of earth and straw, a dunghill, and clean floors, upon

When properly dried, it is carried to the mill, where it is stripped of its husk; cleaned in a sieve; passed a second time through the mill for the purpose of bleaching; and finally, mixed up in troughs with some salt, which contributes equally to its excellent colour and preservation. The preparatory process is then completed, and the rice is ready for sale. The profit of the proprietors of rice fields, in favourable seasons, that is to say, when the rise of the Nile overflows a great extent of ground, is supposed equivalent to fifty per cent. after deducting every possible expence.

Sonnini frequently derived much pleasure and information from his excursions in the environs of Rossetta, where the plains are embellished with a rich variety of plants, and the groves are frequented by several species of birds, whose elegant plumage enlivens the scenery, and whose melodious notes arrest the attention of the passenger. On the 24th of October, he went to an old dilapidated castle, which stands at some distance, to the northward of the town. It was originally designed, with a similar building, on the opposite bank of the Nile, as a defence to the entrance of the river. At present these castles are not much less than three miles from the sea. The former is said to have been erected by St. Lerrio, in the time of the crusades, and several antique stones, covered with hieroglyphics, have been employed in its construction; it is, however, now almost demolished, and the few pieces of cannon that remain in it are totally unfit for service. In the course of his ramble, our author killed some *hou-bous*, *hoopoes*, turtle doves, and a small owl.

...and, has been prominent in the
ral history of birds.

The houhou, or Egyptian cuckoo, has short wings, which are yet disproportional in comparison with its body; it is consequently unable to traverse, in the same flight, to any extent, and unless it meets with something to alight upon, it is soon obliged to fall to ground: it is perfectly tame and easy of approach, and may properly be said to possess the faculty of flying merely, in a sufficient degree, to enable it to catch the insects on which it chiefly feeds. Unlike the common cuckoo, the houhou is a solitary bird; they live in pairs, hatch the eggs, and rear their young, with the same kindness that prevails among the feathered inhabitants of European groves. They delight in dwelling near the residence of man, and render him the most important services, by destroying such insects as would otherwise materially injure his harvests.

raising its head. The hoopoes, likewise, utter a hoarse, disagreeable sound, in one note. Such of these birds as do not quit the country, are joined by flights of travellers, which come from the northern regions, in quest of a warmer climate and a better supply of food. These migratory birds are very fat, and their flesh is equally tender and palatable.

The turtle doves, which arrive in Egypt after the European autumn, and there spread themselves from the sea as far as Cairo, are of the common species; but those which constantly inhabit the same country form a distinct race. The top of their head and neck are a pale mixture of red and white, as are the back and the lesser wing coverts, but the red tint is the more predominant. Upon the upper part of the neck is a black semicircle; the throat and inferior coverts of the tail are white; the under part of the neck a light gride-lin; the stomach and belly of a dingy white. The primary wing quills are brown, mingled with rufous, and the others cinereous, and tipped with a light, ash-coloured grey. The iris of the eye is orange, the bill cinereous, and the legs and feet of a fine rose colour. Turtle doves, of whatever species they may be, are always spared by the Egyptians, who never eat them, but would rather consider it as a violation of hospitality to destroy a harmless race, which visits their country in perfect confidence, and enlivens their groves by their delightful cooings.

The little owl, that was shot by Sonnini in his walk to the ruinous castle, was rather different, in its plumage, from the owls in Europe; but, as the difference was not sufficient to constitute a
distinct

distinct species, he has deemed it unnecessary to give any particular description of it.

Ducks, of several species, arrive annually, in Lower Egypt, from all quarters. The smaller kinds, as the farcelles, or teal, generally appear about the beginning of October, and the larger come later. They all assemble upon the lakes of the Delta, and there form innumerable flocks, which do not quit the country till the return of spring. A great quantity of these birds were sold, remarkably cheap, at the market of Rossetta; but it was almost impossible to procure one whose plumage was uninjured, or that was not mutilated; as their throats are either cut, or their wings broken, and fastened upon their back, in compliance with the dictates of the Mussulmen, who are expressly commanded to eat no animal that has not been bled.

Thrushes arrive in these countries at the same season, and remain there till the month of March. They usually dwell near the habitations of the natives, or share the fragrant accommodations of the turtle doves, amidst the thick foliage of the orange and lemon trees.

Early in the morning, on the 5th of November, there fell a heavy shower of rain, at Rossetta, which was the first that had descended, in the course of the year, to cool the atmosphere of Lower Egypt. It may, therefore, be styled an interesting period, both upon this account, and because it was the beginning of the winter season, so denominated, because the temperature of the air became somewhat less sultry and oppressive.

Next day, our author crossed the Nile, and amused himself, with a long ramble, over

moist and verdant grounds of the Delta. This part of Lower Egypt is an extensive plain, but it has not the fatiguing monotony of other flat countries. The towns and villages are pleasantly situated upon small hills, above the level of the inundation, while shady bowers and beautiful trees, standing at a small distance from each other, limit the view, and only suffer it to extend, through numerous vistas, to points more distant and equally agreeable. Fields, where fertility has fixed her abode; enclosures, where the rich fruit of the orange tree overhangs a profusion of esculent plants and odoriferous flowers; the rustic huts of the husbandmen; and the animals that rove around the pastures, combine together, to rejoice the soul and cheer the eye, in so charming and diversified a landscape; while a multitude of pretty songsters unite their melodious exertions to celebrate, in one harmonic chorus, the perpetual holiday of propitious nature.

Besides turtle doves, of the two species, black-birds and hoopoes, our author here observed several little egrets, or criel herons, of which there are two sorts. Their plumage is entirely of a dazzling white, but they differ in point of size. The individuals, of the smaller species, differ likewise in the colour of their feet, which, in some of them, are black, in others green, and in many of them yellow. This variety is, however, in all probability, rather the effect of age, or sex, than any distinction of race. Some of them have long silky feathers, upon the back, that serve to make plumes and tufts; but as this natural ornament is not seen upon all of them, it may, in all likelihood, be confined to the males. They are exceedingly numerous in the environs of Damietta

mietta. They are not, however, considered game by the inhabitants, nor are they brought to table as an article of food.

These egrets gave rise to a curious adventure in our author's journey, with M. Tott, from Iffetta to Alexandria. The inspector general, combining his knowledge of natural history with that of a little, conceited surgeon, whom he taken with him, decided that the numerous egrets, which constituted the most beautiful ornament of the banks of the Nile, were in reality the ibis, or curlews of the ancients. In consequence of this opinion, a contemptuous smile was cast upon all preceding travellers, who had not discovered the ibis in Egypt; and, in spite of whatever Sonnini could say to the contrary, they firmly maintained their opinion, and congratulated each other on their important remark. They now wished to make an ample collection of these birds, and accordingly, whenever they perceived an egret, they called out loudly to the Egyptian sailors, to manage the boat so as to bring the bird within gun-shot. Near two hundred shots were fired; but, fortunately for the object of their pursuit, they were as unskilful riflemen as uninformed naturalists. The men, who could not conceive the importance of the object, much fatigue, and so many interruptions to their navigation, soon lost all patience, and became outrageous with vexation; yet the firing certainly have continued much longer, had not the surgeon, in a transport of ornithological enthusiasm, fallen into a large pot of lentils, which were cooking for the mariners, in the fore-cabin hold, and, by this ludicrous catastrophe, deterred the travellers to continue their row.

On the 12th of November, our author, attended by an interpreter, a draughtsman, a janizary, and two servants, set out from Rossetta, in order to examine a place, formerly celebrated under the name of Canopus, but now called Aboukir. They ascended the hills of sand, which encircle the western side of Rossetta, entered the plain of Turrets, and from thence struck off to the sea-shore, which they followed as far as the lake Maadiè.

After a tedious passage, over this remnant of the Canopic bank of the Nile, they regained the sea-shore, where an embankment had been thrown up, to confine the waters, and about one o'clock, in the afternoon, they arrived at Aboukir.

At this village is a castle, built upon the point of a cape, which projects into the sea. Beyond the cape, some shoals stretch out, and enclose a small harbour, at the foot of the castle, in front of which there is a good roadstead *. This was usually frequented by merchant ships, when they were necessitated, from tempestuous weather, to quit the new port of Alexandria; and also by the country germs, when they were unable to proceed to Alexandria, or to clear the Bosphorus of the Nile, at the mouth of the Rossetta branch.

Our author and his attendants alighted at the house of a Jew, named Mallum Yousef, who at that time held the place of agent to the French consul general, in Egypt, and who accommodated the travellers with pleasant and convenient apartments, where they partook of a frugal

* A place which will be ever memorable, on account of the glorious victory there obtained, over the fleet of the French republic, by the gallant Admiral Nelson, and his intrepid seamen.

repast, prepared by their landlord's wife, and then remounted their mules, in order to visit the adjacent ruins.

These remains, of an ancient city, occupy a great extent of ground, and still offer many objects of admiration to the spectator; but, though much more valuable relics might be found under the surface, such researches are forbidden by a blind and superstitious people, who possess no other idea of riches, than gold; and, consequently suppose, that foreigners merely travel over their country with the hope of discovering and carrying off some hidden treasures.

Several beautiful, granite columns were distinguished among the ruins, but they were all mutilated and thrown to the ground; their shafts, though exceedingly large, were fluted, and of one piece, and the capitals were of the most exquisite workmanship. Some openings, to subterraneous avenues, were likewise noticed; they were constructed of brick, and in tolerable preservation but their entrance was nearly filled up with rubbish. These majestic ruins are called, "The city of Pharaoh," by the natives of Aboukir; Sonnini affirms, that every thing he saw so demonstrated the splendor and importance of original edifices.

On the sea-shore may be seen the foundation of a large, regular building, in the midst of which is a cavern, leading to the sea, where ruin observable at a considerable distance. This is a convincing proof of the great marine encroachment. Near these antique remains are numerous blocks of granite, and a colossal statue of man, fluted all its length. This is like granite, but it is thrown from its pedestal.

materially injured. There is also a large sphinx, partly mutilated, the pedestal of which is richly covered with hieroglyphics; but they are now almost effaced by the corroding tooth of time.

Such are the remains of the once beautiful and celebrated Canopus, where stood the magnificent temple of Serapis, where a profusion of luxurious pleasures invited crowds of foreigners to the city; and where the beauty of the climate, the fertility of the surrounding country, and the general affluence of the inhabitants, concurred to make it the most enchanting retreat, and the most desirable residence. Luxury, pride, and a shameful depravity of manners were, however, sufficient to ensure its desolation, and Canopus has accordingly fallen, like many other cities, a sacrifice to the vices of the people. Its splendid monuments are now permitted to moulder in the dust; the Nile no longer fertilizes the depopulated soil, the verdant plains are become arid deserts, the descendants of its original inhabitants are mere barbarians, and the place itself no longer exists, but in the memory of individuals, or the page of history.

The day after our arrival at Aboukir, our traveller went to pay his respects to the governor, who was a barber, and who, having received intimation of the Europeans visit, had put on his best apparel, and covered his head with a white shawl. Sonnini found him sitting in his shop with all the gravity of a vizier, and bearing a fan of feathers in his hand: he received his guest with great solemnity; offered him any service that lay in his power; and expressed his regret *at being unable to present him with coffee, from the unlucky circumstance of its being locked up*

On Sonnini's withdrawing, he preserved the same state that he assumed on his entrance.

The castle of Aboukir is a place of small importance. On the land side, it is surrounded by a ditch, and it is furnished with a light house; but this was so badly illuminated, as only to be discerned at a small distance. The fort is defended by a few pieces of small cannon, which are, however, so contemptible, as to permit the Russians to take the germs from the very shelter of the batteries. As most of the male inhabitants are either fishermen or sailors, belonging to the germs, the village of Aboukir seems uninhabited during the day, and scarcely any person is seen in the streets.

One of the villagers, having noticed our author's admiration of a long, black stone, covered with hieroglyphics, in the market place, came up and offered to sell him a fine statue, which was partly buried in the ground. Sonnini, accordingly, sent one of his servants with the stranger, but no statue was to be found. That he might not, however, lose his expected profit, the man began to remove the earth, and soon discovered a beautiful, little pyramid, of the finest black marble encircled with hieroglyphics, and in high preservation. This curious monument of antiquity was immediately purchased by the European who employed his Jewish host to transmit Rossetta, by the first conveyance. "The reason," says our author, "may conceive the rich this mine of antiquities, covered by a very layer of earth and rubbish, when a man, provided with any implement, and with his staff alone, could scrape up the soil at hazard."

cover, in less than half an hour, such a valuable treasure."

Having made this acquisition, and satisfied his curiosity with an examination of Aboukir and its environs, our traveller set out for Rossetta, where he arrived about ten o'clock at night, having observed, upon the beach, a great number of wagtails, and, upon the palm trees, some blackbirds which, together with the thrushes, arrive in the northern parts of Egypt, at the beginning of the winter. All the day there was a strong wind, from the east south-east, the heavens were overspread with clouds, and towards evening there was a shower of rain. The sea was high, and its agitated waves, breaking with violence against the banks of Aboukir, and rolling furiously along the coast, spread a terrific sound through the adjacent deserts, and rendered the passage of the travellers peculiarly solemn.

On his return to Rossetta, Sonnini was anxious to obtain a more perfect view of the Boghass, or mouth of the Nile, so celebrated for shipwrecks and extreme danger; he accordingly set out with the vice consul, a drogoman, and a French merchant, mounted upon asses. Stopping at the gardens above the castle, they found an encampment of Bedouin Arabs, whose small and uncomfortable tents announced the misery of the inhabitants. The women of these people did not conceal their faces, like the other nations who are settled in Egypt; the youngest of them were rendered tolerably agreeable by the bloom of youth, and they were apparently of an obliging disposition. The travellers were soon surrounded by these females, who asked charity, and were perfectly satisfied with the distribution of a few medicines.

medicines. While the merchant and his attendant were carrying on a lively conversation with these young Arabs, our author was encompassed by a group of old women, whose dark and shrivelled faces, rendered still more frightful by means of punctures traced upon their chins, excited horror and disgust. As, however, they probably considered him more generous than his companions, they kept him in the midst of them for a considerable time, till at length, after a thousand fruitless efforts, he escaped from the hideous and importunate circle.

Pursuing his route, towards the sea, his beast, with those of his fellow travellers, frequently stumbled on the slippery ground, which had been recently covered by the Nile, and either sunk with their riders in the mire, or precipitated them into the water of the ditches, that intersected the disagreeable road. Each of the companions, it seems, had an equal share in these little accidents, and in the little observations to which they gave rise. At length, however, they approached the narrow and perilous channel that forms the bar at the mouth of the Nile. The sea was breaking over it with surprising violence, and raising boisterous waves, mingled with foam and sand. They also discerned the mast heads of two galleys, that had been lately wrecked; and, upon the beach, some sailors were employed in removing the lifeless bodies of their friends or shipmates, which had been thrown on shore, by the agitation of the waters. The coast, which is low, and entirely consisting of sand, was covered with an abundance of water-fowl, as gulls, herons, sea-larks, &c.

Next day our author went to see a tower, at a small distance to the south of Rossetta, called the Tower of Canopus, by the generality of the natives, who erroneously suppose that the town of Rossetta is the site of the ancient Canopus. This tower is a modern building, though in a ruinous condition: it is situated upon a hillock of sand, which here forms the western bank of the Nile. In the lower part is a subterraneous passage, said, by the inhabitants of the district, to lead to Alexandria. From the top of the tower may be had a general view of the country, which has no other bounds but those of nature. In the east are displayed the rich treasures of verdure and fertility, upon the elegant carpet of the Delta; to the north is distinguished the rolling waves of the ocean; and to the west the parched deserts of Lybia confess the dominion of eternal sterility.

At the brink of the Nile, and near the base of the tower, stands a mosque, consecrated to a Mahometan saint, called Abou Mandour, or Father of the Light. He is considered as a powerful protector, and is, therefore, held in universal veneration, insomuch that no boat ever passes before the mosque, without the mariners and passengers making an offering to the shech, in order to conciliate the favour of the saint.

Upon the eastern bank of the Nile, opposite to the mosque of Abou Mandour, are two or three houses, denominated Maadié, because their situation faces the usual passage to the Delta. Beyond Maadié is the village Boussourath, formerly inhabited by a great number of robbers, who used to plunder the boats, till they were happily exterminated by the laudable exertions of Mahomet Bey

Boy. A little above Bouffourath is another village, called Hachbet.

On the western side of the river, at a distance from the aforesaid mosque, is a considerable village, called Dgeddié, the environs of which are richly clothed with vines. This neighbourhood supplies Rosetta and Alexandria with grapes. The leaves of the vine are likewise an important article in Egypt, as they are freely used, when young, to envelope large hashed meat, that are commonly served up to the tables of the great, and forms the finest Egyptian cookery.

On his return to Rosetta, our traveller learned that the garrison of the castle at A had prevented the Jew droghman, from opening the little pyramid, which has been described to our readers, with the circumstances of its discovery. At length, however, the Rosetta, who was also commandant of A, was persuaded to permit the monument to be sent, though he alleged that the people whom Sonnini had bargained, had no right to dispose of it; and that it was to him alone, per application could have been made. His wife added, that he understood the pyramid was full of gold, and therefore resolved to examine it immediately on its arrival, when, if his surmise should prove groundless, he would consent to its being sent to the European.

Notwithstanding these precautions, the pasha caused the Janizary, who had accompanied Sonnini to Aboukir, to be brought before him, in order to learn whether there was any gold in the monument. This he knew that gold was not the object of a

an's research in Egypt, endeavoured to undeceive him; but his efforts were all in vain, as the Mameluke could not possibly suppose any value would be set upon a *stone*, and asked a number of questions, upon the subject, that were equally senseless and fatiguing.

At length the pyramid was landed, at the port of Rossetta, when a crowd of curious spectators assembled, and uttered many exclamations of surprise and admiration on its beauty, as it sparkled in the sun, and was universally supposed to be a precious stone, in the strictest sense of the expression. "They could not," says Sonnini, "refrain from feeling a respect for the Franks, who had the sagacity to discover so admirable a treasure."

As it was natural to suppose that the observations of so many ignorant admirers, would reach the ears of the aga, and confirm him in his erroneous opinion, respecting the value of the marble, our author resolved to leave it on the wharf, and to appear to relinquish it entirely. In consequence of this, the aga, who had been fully convinced that it was a mere stone, became surprised at the silence of the supposed purchaser, and sent for the Janizary, to know the reason why it was not taken away. The latter told the aga, as he had been instructed, that, after the claims he had made upon the monument, Sonnini had dropped all thought of having it; but that he was still willing to purchase it, if the price should not be unreasonable. The Janizary returned with an order for its removal to the lodgings of our author, and the result was, that it was finally purchased for a present of small value.

The absurd opinion, that Europeans had ^{no} other view, in their researches, than the discovery of hidden treasures, is universally held by all the Egyptians, and is in fact one of the greatest difficulties that a traveller has to vanquish. A Turk, who resided at Rossetta, had a very beautiful piece of granite, enriched with hieroglyphics, at the door of his store-house. Sonnini requested the proprietor to sell him the granite, offering, at the same time, to have another stone placed in its stead, at his own expence; but the Turk, with the usual stupidity of the people, peremptorily rejected the proposal, alleging, as a motive for his refusal, that the granite was full of gold. As the man was indigent, our traveller asked him why, if such was his belief, he did not break the stone to obtain the precious contents, which appeared so necessary to him. When he replied, that his stone was a talisman, and therefore such an action would certainly involve him in guilt, and might probably overwhelm him with misfortunes.

Notwithstanding the assertions of some modern writers, it is very certain, that the plague is not endemical in Egypt, nor does it originate in that country. Whenever it makes its appearance, it is either brought from Turkey or the interior of Africa. The latter kind is called the Said Plague, and is accordingly dreaded, as being more destructive than that which is brought from other quarters.

As a convincing proof, that the Egyptian climate rather opposes than produces this most fatal of contagions, our author observes that, at the period of his travels, it had not been experienced there for upwards of twelve years, notwithstanding the imprudent neglect of the inhabitants,

with respect to its introduction. Ships frequently touched at Alexandria, in their passage from Constantinople, which may be justly styled the focus of this dreadful malady; caravans from Africa arrived several times in a year at Cairo, and yet no pestilential symptom had appeared. It is even a well known fact that, in 1780, a vessel, belonging to the grand signior, had entered the old port of Alexandria, with the plague on board. A man who stood near a chest, that was opened, was struck with the pestiferous effluvia that issued from it, and fell down dead upon the spot, yet all the Turkish mariners went on shore, walked through different parts of the town, and even mingled with the inhabitants, without exciting the smallest anxiety, or producing any unfortunate effect.

No epidemical diseases, in fact, prevail in Egypt, where foreigners are never attacked by those violent and inflammatory fevers, which are so justly dreaded in the West India colonies; nor are they tormented by those intermittent fevers, which, in those countries, are the certain preludes of numerous obstructions and dropsy. Sonnini acknowledges that he was afflicted, in Upper Egypt, by the ophthalmia in one of his eyes, and that his draughtsman suffered, for a considerable time, under a cutaneous disorder; but, otherwise, they enjoyed a good state of health, and frequently noticed the visible amendment of several Turks, who arrived from Constantinople, in a state of sickness, and with the most emaciated appearance.

With respect to the burial of the dead, some traces of the precautions, taken by the ancient Egyptians, are still visible in the practice of the moderns.

moderns. The curious art of embalming deed, totally forgotten; but the care with which they arrange the bodies of their deceased relatives, at least, the shadow of that ancient and complete practice.

Immediately upon the death of an Egyptian the body is carefully washed, the beard and every aperture closely stopped with wax. It is then sprinkled with odoriferous water, and the perfumes of Arabia are permitted to enter into all the pores. After these attentions to respect and cleanliness, it is placed in a coffin covered with some sort of cloth, the colour of which is optional, and carried, with the head foremost, to the silent mansions of the tomb, preceded by priests, who recite various passages from the Koran, and female mourners, who are hired to utter the most loud and dismal exclamations of grief. A small, stone pillar, crowned with a turban, is erected at the spot where reposes the head of the deceased; and every Friday the women flock thither, with devout enthusiasm, to renew their mournful adieus.

However great may be their respect for the dead, the orientals would deem themselves excusable in injuring the health of the living; therefore, their cemeteries are placed beyond the limits of any habitation. They are large, airy enclosures, admirably adapted for the reception of visitors, who are led thither by no fond regret, or pious affection. The bodies are covered with a thick layer of earth, which serves them from the confusion and derangement that the course of time might otherwise produce. A precaution equally prudent and delicate.

As there were no places destined for the burial of the French at Rosetta, those who died, were conveyed to Alexandria, and there interred in the convent of St. George. These funeral journies, being conducted by land, were consequently very expensive.

Our author having heard much talk of a race of the Pfylli, (who were persuaded that they possessed the power of setting serpents at defiance, of charming them, causing the reptiles to follow them at command, and of curing their bites,) resolved to obtain the best information concerning them, and accordingly found that there now exists a sect, called Saadis, from the name of their founder, a saint highly venerated by the Egyptian Mussulmen. This Saadi had a wealthy uncle in Lybia, who sent him occasionally to fetch some wood from the desert. One day the lad, having cut the faggot, was greatly at a loss for something to tie it, till at length, after a fruitless research, he resolved to knot several serpents together, and accordingly bound up his faggot with this living cord. The uncle, equally surprised and charmed with the boy's acuteness, told him, that he was now adequate to the task of making his way in the world, as his knowledge was superior to that of his elders. The ingenious youth immediately took the hint, and began travelling over the country, charming serpents by his supernatural skill, till at length he had a great number of disciples, to whom he communicated his art. His tomb is in the vicinity of Damascus, and is filled with serpents and other venomous animals, among which a person may repose in perfect safety.

Such is the superstitious origin of a *fun* fest in Egypt, each individual of which *h* affirms that he inherits the skill of its *fo*u. His festival is annually celebrated, in a *ma* analogous to the institution. The Saadis *na* in procession through the streets, each holdi living serpent in his hand, which he bites, swallows piecemeal, with the most frightful grimaces and horrid contortions. But as this similar festival is only celebrated in the summer, traveller was extremely anxious to examine behaviour of one of these serpent eaters; and, accordingly, with the assistance of his friend, Forneti, he prevailed on one of the fest to induce him with the exhibition at his own apartment. On the appointed day, the Saadi came, accompanied by his priest, who carried a large serpent in his bosom, which he was continually handling. Sonnini observed that the reptile's teeth had been drawn, however, it was very lively, and of greenish, copper colour.

After having recited a prayer, the priest delivered the creature to the Saadi, who seized it with a muscular hand; but, on its entwining it round his arm, his countenance changed, his face rolled dreadfully, and he uttered the most pining cries. He then bit the serpent in the head and tore off a piece, which he instantly chewed and swallowed. At that moment his agitation increased to convulsion, his limbs writhed, his howlings redoubled, and his mouth, distended the most shocking grimaces, was literally covered with foam, while he occasionally devoured fragments of the animal, with all the marks of confirmed madness. Three men exerted themselves to hold him, but he violently dragged them



• *F. Gaadi exhibiting his art in Tonnois apartments.*

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found the room, throwing out his arms in every direction, and striking furiously against whatever stood in his reach; insomuch, that Sonnini and his friend were frequently obliged to cling to the wall, in order to avoid his blows. After some time the priest took the serpent from him, but he still bit his hands, and continued to rage with the fury of a maniac. The priest, however, at length clasped him in his arms, put his hand gently upon his back, lifted him from the ground, and recited some prayers, when his agitations gradually subsided, and for a few moments he seemed totally exhausted.

"The Turks," says Sonnini, "who were present, were fully convinced of the reality of this religious frenzy; and it must be confessed that, whether reality or imposture, it was impossible to express the transports of madness, in a more striking manner, or to exhibit a human being in a more terrific situation." In Egypt, the Saadis are much respected, but among the Turks, who dwell in the other parts of the Ottoman empire, they are merely objects of derision.

Our author had an opportunity of conversing with a shech, or priest, of this sect, who was of an open disposition, and candidly assured him that, though several individuals of his fraternity had an uncommon power over serpents, he had not the smallest claim to it himself, but, on the contrary, acknowledged that he was extremely afraid of these reptiles; he likewise observed, that the Saadis always keep serpents in their houses, to be ready upon any occasion; but they previously take the precaution of drawing their teeth. If any person be bitten by a serpent, the Saadi, to whom he applies, mutters a few words over the wound

wound, scarifies it with a razor, and, having first filled his mouth with lemon juice, sucks the blood from it repeatedly. These men are likewise said to cure "the serpent's breath," an appellation given by the Egyptians, to inflammatory pustules, which sometimes break out on persons who sleep uncovered in the open air, and which they suppose are occasioned by the breath of a serpent. The remedy of the Saadis is a mixture of ceruse, or white lead, and oil of sesamum, with which they rub the pustules, at the same time muttering a few unintelligible words, to impress the superstitious patient with veneration for their superior abilities.

Sonnini having been now two months at Rosetta, and finding it impossible to penetrate into upper Egypt, which was filled with undisciplined combatants and lawless banditti, he resolved to visit that part of the Lybian Desert, called the Desert of Nitra, or of St. Macarius; he therefore wrote to Cairo, in order to obtain the protection of Ismael Bey, and, as a stronger shield than all the recommendations of authority, he assumed the character of a physician, and adorned himself with a red turban, which, joined to his dress, and that of his companions, who were habited as soldiers of the beys, made him sometimes pass for a kiaschef, or officer of the Mamelukes.

On the 29th of December, our author quitted Rosetta, mounted like his attendants, upon mules, and followed by a camel that carried the baggage, in a handsome sort of large, covered pannier, he was also accompanied by a Janizary, whom the consul desired to attend him to Aboukir.

At the lake of Maadié, the travellers found a commodious, decked boat; and at the distance of
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half a league from the opposite shore, they met with a small encampment of Bedouins, who offered them some water, and invited them, in the most pressing manner, to pass the night beneath the shelter of their tents. Sonnini made no hesitation in placing a confidence in them, as previous to his arrival, some European merchants, with their wives, had accepted their offer of nocturnal accommodation, and were perfectly satisfied with their behaviour; he therefore hired some of them to escort the camel, whose slow pace had hitherto retarded his progress, and took the lead with his Janizary and mules, to the village of Aboukir, where he arrived about eight o'clock in the evening.

When the Jew drogueman, at whose house our author alighted, was informed of the object of the intended journey, he exclaimed loudly against the rashness of the enterprise, represented it as dangerous even to madness, and, when solicited to procure camels for the purpose of traversing the Desert, he declared that he would take no share in a business, which must inevitably terminate in misfortune.

At length, however, finding that all his persuasions and remonstrances only tended to incense Sonnini, without effecting the least change in his resolutions, he sent for a chief of Bedouin Arabs, who was encamped at a small distance from Aboukir, and who was equally celebrated for his bravery and fidelity. This man arrived about midnight, and readily consented, for a stipulated sum, to furnish our author with a horse and four camels, and to accompany him on the road, without his being obliged to provide food for either the animals or their master. The conditions of

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this engagement were minuted down by the Jew, and at day break an Egyptian scribe drew a formal agreement in Arabic, which was solemnly signed and attested by witnesses, who, together with the Jew, the Janizary, and the traveller, were all seated in a circle on the ground, each stretching out his right hand, offered a prayer to God and to Mahomet, and then took hold of his beard or chin, after the custom of the country, which thus guarantees the performance of every written or verbal contract.

During these arrangements, the inhabitants of Aboukir, who had raised such difficulties respecting the little pyramid purchased on a former occasion, assembled together, on being informed of Sonnini's return, and loudly demanded restitution for the immense riches of which they had deprived them; at the same time endeavouring to raise their countrymen, by asserting that the European was now hiring camels for the express purpose of despoiling their country of all its hidden valuables. The barber governor was anxious to share the heaps of gold, to be found, and prepared for removal, and accordingly made his shop re-echo with imprecations against the Franks in general, and our author in particular. The riot was now becoming general; the Jew drogueman trembled with excess of terror; the Janizary harangued the populace, in order to undeceive them, and the travellers themselves were greatly alarmed with Sonnini, notwithstanding his private fears, resolved to treat the uproar with contempt and apparent indifference, and in order to remove every suspicion of his apprehensions, he kept his mules belonging to Rossetta, and set out the

morning, to traverse the range of coast, which lies between Aboukir and Alexandria.

At a small distance, to the westward of Aboukir, he passed through a small village, called Kasr Dsjami, or Castle of the Mosque. From hence to Alexandria he met with nothing but some large houses, built singly, and inhabited by cultivators. Their construction is entirely modern, though some ancient pieces of granite have been used among the other materials. Each of these houses is denominated kasr, or castle, to which some peculiar designation is added. They are all enclosed by walls, but these outworks are too slight to resist the attacks of the Bedouins, who frequently make considerable breaches in them, in order to commit their depredations.

After partaking of a light refreshment, beneath the shade of date trees, in the vicinage of Alexandria, our traveller returned towards Aboukir, where he found the people more outrageous than before his departure. Some shameless villains affirmed that they had repeatedly seen the Frank come by night into their neighbourhood, load his beasts with gold, and immediately depart. This was sufficient to enflame the fury of the mob, who accordingly resolved to let the travellers load their riches on the camels, that were to be furnished by the Bedouins, and then to attack and murder them, in order to recover the stolen treasures.

This project was a source of great uneasiness to Sonnini's companions, but for his own part he betrayed no sign of fear, and was determined not to fall an *easy* sacrifice, in case the threat should be put in execution. This mode of conduct had the desired effect, as the stupid crowd, which surrounded

surrounded the camels, at the hour of departure, thought proper to confine their vengeance to a few malicious words, and suffered our author to pursue his journey without molestation.

Having taken leave of the Jew, who still entertained that his advice might be followed, our adventurer directed his route to the south-east, over a sandy, uncultivated plain, where he observed a numerous herd of Antelopes, and met with the tomb of a Mahometan saint, where he observed pious travellers of Egypt enter, for the purpose of devotion. Our author went in, with his Bedouin sheick, whose name was Hussein. Here he saw a piece of beautiful white marble, bearing a Greek inscription, to the following purport:

* * * * * EUTOLUS,
GOVERNOR OF THE NINETEENTH DEPARTMENT
IN HONOUR OF EGYPTIAN JUPITER.
THE FOUNDATION OF THIS MONUMENT IS
TEN CUBITS,
ITS PERPENDICULAR ELEVATION IS
FORTY CUBITS,
THE HEIGHT OF ITS SIDES IS A HUNDRED CUBITS,
IN HONOUR OF ALEXANDER,
OF HIS ARMY,
AND OF EGYPTIAN JUPITER.

Half of the first line was effaced, but the remainder was in excellent preservation. Nor did our author express a wish to have this monument, than Hussein pulled it up from the pavement and tendered it to him for sale. It was two inches long, sixteen broad, and about two inches thick. It seems, however, that this curiosity, nor the pyramid of Abou el-Hassan, ever carried to France. At five o'clock the travellers arrived at Hussein.

having performed a journey of about twenty-one miles in eight hours.

The Bedouins having been apprised of this visit, had driven out the animals from Hussein's tent, and prepared it for Sonnini's reception. A few faggots covered with carpets, of the women's manufacture, served as seats, and the tent of the chief was distinguished by a large plume of ostrich feathers, placed at the top. These temporary dwellings are all of the same shape, and only differ in size; they are all low, of much greater length than breadth, and entirely open on one side; they are constructed of a stuff that is made from camel's hair.

The camp was situated about a hundred yards from the canal of Alexandria, the waters of which turned off by the industrious Bedouins, diffused fertility through an extensive piece of ground. Various kinds of food were here cultivated for animals and horses; camels, sheep, and oxen, were seen at pasture.

Scarcely an hour had elapsed since our traveller's alighting, when the whole of Hussein's Bedouins were thrown into the greatest disorder, at the sight of some predatory Arabs, who were discovered in the plain. Every person was instantly in motion, the women shrieked with fear, the men ran to their arms, some mounting the first horse they could find, and others setting out on foot in pursuit of the robbers. In the midst of this confusion our European and his companions remained with the aged men and the women, to guard the camp, and after a short time tranquillity was re-established. A live sheep, designed for the supper of the travellers was then brought to Sonnini, but when it was perceived that he

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was desirous of sparing the animal men presented him with some delicate variety of little cakes, that were good.

It is indeed among these societies that the traveller meets with that faculty which instantaneously converts a brother, where simple and natural use of articles equally simple, a refusal would give real pain to the person them; whereas, by a cheerful acceptance a stranger infallibly inspires esteem and danger of being deemed either intemperate or dissolute. Luxury and dissipation are their constant attendant, immorality is no attempt to fix their abode on the earth; neither is jealousy here the tyrant sex. The manners of the people are pure and simple, as described in the histories. Unlike the other nations the Bedouin women are not afraid to show their faces, or to converse with the men with pleasing gaiety, which is the consequence, and the enemy of remorse. The men are generally very handsome, a simple mode of life, though injured by excess, permits them to live in health and existence, and frequently to attain an advanced age they are remarkable and patriarchal physiognomy. There is a part of this nation, whose nature is in a manner perverted, by the habit of wandering upon a toilsome and wandering life, *ever miserable, wandering, and generally of a slender make and weakness, nor is it easy to discover any traces of the beauty of their origin.*

After presenting some trifles to the hospitable Arabs, Sonnini and his companions resumed their journey on the 1st of January, 1778, and proceeded in a south-easterly direction, along the canal of Alexandria. Exclusive of the village Karioum, that stands at the distance of three miles from the camp, and a few small spots of cultivation, the whole tract of country was an entire plain of sand. The opposite bank of the canal presented a more cheerful prospect, being pleasantly enlivened by a number of villages.

At the village Bersik, our author met with an encampment of Bedouins, who surrounded him with all the gestures of astonishment, stared at him, and felt his skin, as if he had been some uncommon animal. The women were equally anxious with the men, to gratify their curiosity, but they accompanied it with a present of excellent milk.

Beyond Bersik, the arid plains of sand were succeeded by fertile fields, where our author perceived a prodigious quantity of larks flying in large flocks. About noon, he arrived at three villages adjoining, each other, which bear collectively the denomination of Sentaw. Here he presented a letter from Ismael Bey, to the Shech el Belad, or chief of the country, who recognised the *seal*, though he was unable to read the contents. A dinner was provided for the travellers; but Sonnini affirms, that it was disgusting in itself, and rendered still worse, by the filthy manner in which the peasants and Bedouins fell upon the dishes.

At two o'clock, he continued his route across beautiful and extensive plains, richly embellished with a profusion of beans, which, being in blossom

som, diffused a sweet and reviving fragrance through the air. Some hillocks formed a charming contrast with the uniform brilliancy of these beds of flowers, and the ruins of several deserted habitations served to complete the picturesque scene. Towards evening, the travellers reached the village of Guebil, seated on the western bank of the canal, and, like all the others in that country, built of mud. Sonnini was told that the mosque contained a very fine figure, he accordingly requested permission to examine it, and was not a little disappointed, to find nothing more than the half of a lion's head, enclosed in the wall of the temple.

Next day he crossed the canal of Alexandria, then destitute of water, and arrived about ten o'clock in the morning at Damanhour, having travelled over a pleasant road, that intersected several fields of beans and trefoil. This extent of cultivated land constitutes a part of the province Bahira, of which Damanhour is the capital.

The city of Damanhour is tolerably spacious, but very indifferently built, as most of the houses are constructed of earth, or bad brick. It is the residence of the bey, or governor of Bahira, and of a kiaschef, or particular commandant; but what is more important, it is the centre of trade, for the cotton that is gathered in the circumjacent plains. In picking this useful article from the bushes, beating, carding, and spinning it, consists the chief employment of the inhabitants. The only piece of antiquity discovered at Damanhour, was a small bronze idol, pierced with holes, probably in order to be worn as an amulet; it was two inches three lines in length.

On the morning of the 4th, our traveller proceeded on his journey towards the Desert. At a small distance, to the south-east of the city, stands a small village, from whence he directed his route to the southward, till he reached the village Graguefs. From Graguefs he travelled south south-east, to Dentschell, a village whose name implies "a jar carried off." The villagers pretend, that their ancestors having once found a large vase, on this spot, filled with gold, deferred the division of the treasure till the following day, but when they returned, they found, to their equal surprise and vexation, that both gold and jar were removed beyond their reach. To this anecdote, whether true or fabulous, the peasants affirm that the village owes its name. Immediately adjoining Dentschell, is another village, called Lavoischi, or "across," on account of its transversal situation, in respect to Dentschell; and on the other side of the road are the ruins of a large village, constructed of mud, and built upon an eminence.

The travellers now continued their route to Schambrenoum, and from thence to Nagrasch, where they passed the night. At their arrival, the villagers hastily retired to their houses, and shut their doors, under the erroneous opinion, that they were either the kiaschef's people, or predatory Bedouins. At length, however, our author and his attendants obtained a shelter at the house of the Shech el Belad; but as the inhabitants were in constant fear of an attack from some other villages, with whom they were at war, all idea of repose was precluded, and scarcely an hour passed without false alarms, from the terror and timidity of the women.

Next day, Sonnini and his followers proceeded to Ramfés, situated upon the bank of a large canal. At some distance from this place, he discerned about two hundred persons, some on foot and some on horseback; they were immediately supposed Bedouin robbers, and the little party began to make the best preparation for a vigorous resistance, but on their near approach, they found that the object of their alarm was a funeral procession.

Continuing their route through Kadoufs and Abouamer, they soon arrived at the town of Biban, which is the residence of a kiaschef. Every Monday there is held at this place a considerable market for cattle. The travellers happened to arrive upon market-day, and consequently found it difficult to obtain a passage, on account of the great concourse of men and beasts. In about a quarter of an hour, the travellers entered Herbeté, and soon after reached two villages, which together were known by the appellation of Honéze. About three miles to the eastward of Honéze, is the small town of Saffrané.

The districts, through which the journey had hitherto been conducted, were chiefly favoured by nature, and presented the most interesting and magnificent spectacle to the contemplative admirer, but our European had now reached the borders of the Desert, and found that the village Honéze formed a boundary between the most brilliant vegetation, richly fertilized by the waters of the Nile, and the most complete aridity, vainly moistened by the copious dews of heaven.

On the 6th of January, our author entered upon the immense desert of Lybia, the abode of eternal sterility and burning drought, where

road nor path of any kind, can serve to guide the weary traveller's steps; where tracks, which hardly leave an impression, are immediately effaced, and men are frequently swallowed up in waves of sand, raised by the impetuous winds. The Arabic name of these sterile regions, which consist entirely of sand and stone, without a single particle of vegetable earth, is Dsjebel, or mountain. The ground, in fact, rises by an easy ascent, which forms at first acclivities, then hills, and finally mountains.

The travellers ascended imperceptibly, for about six miles, a thick bed of fine moving sand. They then entered plains, covered with small stones, and in proportion as they approached the more elevated lands, the fine sand disappeared, till at length it was lost on the summit of the hills, where the stratum became solid, interspersed with coloured pebbles, a species of jasper that takes a most beautiful polish, and pieces of petrified wood. There are likewise some small spots, full of vitrifiable stones, of a reddish grey colour, and strongly fixed in the ground. These substances, however, are but appendages to a scene of horror and aridity, as on these dreary and rugged spaces no plant relieves the aching eye, no tree spreads forth its hospitable branches, to shelter the feverish and exhausted traveller from the insupportable beams of the noon-day sun. It is only in the chasms between the hills, and in the less elevated situations, that a few slender and hardy plants creep along the thirsty ground, and a few shrubs, producing as many thorns as leaves, may be merely said to vegetate. *In the less ungrateful spots, these shrubs sometimes grow in patches, and form dismal warrens.*

where hares make their forms, and antelopes find a covert, and a scanty supply of pasture.

After travelling all day towards the south-west, our author halted at six in the evening, and passed the night upon the sand. He suffered greatly from the cold, and after midnight was as completely wetted by a copious dew, as if he had been exposed to a heavy rain.

Early in the morning he continued his journey, till, having travelled about forty miles from Honéze, he arrived at the summit of a chain of hills, extending to the north north-west. At the distance of ten or twelve miles is another chain, parallel to the first; they form between them a deep valley, the sides of which are perpendicular from the top of the hills to more than half of their height; the other part is a gentle descent of fine, loose sand. At the foot of one of the hills, in the bottom of the valley, are the lakes of natron, where an extensive sheet of water, a number of shrubs that overshadow its banks, a profusion of reeds, and other aquatic plants, that clothe its surface, and an elegant assemblage of birds and antelopes, which come thither to quench their thirst, constitute a scene sufficiently agreeable to interest the traveller, whose patience and spirits have been nearly exhausted by the hideous monotony of the Desert.

It is impossible to ascertain, with any degree of precision, the extent of these lakes, as it varies materially, according to the seasons; when there is most water, the two lakes are united, and form one, which is much longer than broad, and occupies a space of several leagues. At other times, they are only ponds, that occupy but a small space of ground. When the two lakes se
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parate, and their waters retire, the ground, lately inundated, is covered with a sediment, that is soon hardened and crystallized by the sun; this is the natron. Some writers have described the water as being covered with this substance, but, at the time of Sonnini's researches, they were clear and limpid. The natron is disengaged from the ground by iron instruments, and carried by camels to Terané, where it is shipped for Cairo, or Rossetta.

Upon the declivity of the hill, near the lakes, stands a small house, in which the Copts say there was born a saint, whom they highly venerate under the name of Maximous. Probably the Maximus, or Maximinius, of the Catholic legend.

Having spent some time in traversing the banks of the lakes, our author continued his route over a fatiguing tract of sand, that was entirely covered with hardened natron, till he arrived within sight of a Coptic convent, whose appearance was the most horrible and forbidding of any edifice he had ever yet discovered. Its walls, though very high, can scarcely be distinguished from the sands of the Desert at any distance, as they have the same colour and aspect. Not a single tree, or shrub, is planted in its vicinity, nor is there any road that leads to it, or any apparent entrance; even the footsteps of men are soon covered by the moving sand, or effaced by the feet of wild and sanguinary animals.

When the travellers had approached within five hundred yards of the monastery, Hussein went on before, in order to obtain admittance, while Sonnini rode slowly forward, at some distance, and the rest of the party had lagged a considerable way behind. At this moment a tro-

of Bedouin horsemen rushed out from behind the walls, when Sonnini, who discerned the number and quality of his enemies, turned back, and rejoined his companions, who had also discovered their danger, and were drawn up in a close body, fully resolved to make a vigorous defence. Our author immediately dismounted, and exerted himself, to encourage their laudable intention; but his whole party consisted only of six persons, and three of those were such as could not possibly be depended on. The robbers rode up to them at full gallop, but perceiving their firmness, they halted at the distance of a hundred yards, and desired them not to fire. Sonnini, in return, commanded them to keep their distance, and for some moments they remained in apparent uncertainty how to act. At length, however, they divided themselves into four bodies, three of which immediately stationed themselves on the flanks, and in the rear of the travellers. This unexpected manœuvre disconcerted the courageous few, who, in spite of all their leader's exhortations, refused to defend themselves, or to discharge a single shot. Sonnini threw down his gun in vexation, and the banditti immediately stripped both him and his followers of their money, clothes, arms, provisions, and, in fact, of the whole of their property. Our author, indeed, was permitted to retain his breeches and under-waistcoat, but his followers were stripped to their shirts; and he was himself cruelly deprived of his turban, by which means his bare head was exposed to the insufferable heat of the sun. About twenty more Arabs then advanced from behind a heap of stones, and, with many altercations, began to divide the spoil.

"This scene," says Sonnini, "would have furnished a striking subject for a skilful painter, who might have represented, on one side, the troop of robbers covered with dust, and with black countenances, as parched as the sands, quarrelling about the division of the property; in the midst of these my old servant, making occasional snatches at some of the most valuable articles; in the fore ground, the soldier, perfectly confounded and motionless; the two Egyptians, gazing at each other with stupid astonishment; myself in the back ground, biting my nails with choler and vexation; and lastly, the draughtsman, weeping aloud, and answering with sobs, when I asked if he had been ill-used, "No, Sir; but what can we now get to eat?"

Sonnini was now advancing towards the convent, whither Hussein had repaired, but was immediately arrested by the chief of the robbers, who, without assigning any reason, conducted him back into the midst of his troop. Our author naturally supposed, that the banditti had either resolved to take from him his remaining clothes, or otherwise to seal up the dread of discovery by his death; but, to his utter astonishment, the chief, who had been rather too officious in stripping, now returned the different parts of his dress, with much civility, together with his purse and arms, while other Bedouins rendered the same acceptable service to the other forlorn and terrified travellers.

This, it seems, was effected by the spirited behaviour of Hussein, who, having reached the spot where most of the predatory band were assembled, thus addressed himself to their chiefs.

"Arabs, you have stripped a man entrusted to my protection; a man with whom I have eaten, who has reposed in my tent, and become my brother, for whose safety I will readily stake my own life. Never again can I revisit my camp, or hope for the pleasure of embracing my beloved family. Arabs, either restore every article that you have taken from my brother, or kindly terminate my insupportable existence." This energetic harangue, delivered in a resolute tone, and with the most determined look, made some impression on the barbarians, and while they were consulting together, Hussein snatched his gun from a person who held it, and levelling it at the principal chief, resolved to shoot him, in case of a refusal, that he might thereby draw their vengeance upon his own head, rather than live under the stigma of his friend's misfortune. He was well known to the Arabs, who were fully convinced that he would execute his threats, and therefore, partly from fear, and partly from respect, they consented to restore the property of Sonnini and his companions; and this was immediately performed with the most admirable fidelity. Nor was it enough for these robbers to appear just, they must also show themselves polite. The black chief insisted upon our author's mounting his horse, to ride from the scene of recent confusion to the monastery, while some other Bedouins paid a similar compliment to his fellow travellers. On their approaching the convent, some baskets of bread, and platters of lentils, were let down by a rope, which furnished the whole party with a timely and acceptable repast. At the conclusion of their meal, some of the Arabs approached the European with a d

gree of frankness and cordiality, expressing their satisfaction at his personal safety, and chiding him for undertaking to traverse a desert, which they acknowledged to be the resort of thieves and banditti.

Lastly, that nothing might be wanting to complete the succession of these extraordinary scenes, the Bedouin chief desired that Sonnini would write him a certificate, stating that he had met with him in the Desert, and that he had taken nothing from him, but on the contrary, had behaved in the most satisfactory manner. This certificate was written in Arabic, and signed by our traveller, who having no desire to attest his name to the conduct of a banditti, subscribed *La Deroute*. The chief then pocketed the paper, and after cautioning the European to be on his guard, resumed his journey, in quest of new adventures.

Having got rid of these dangerous people, Sonnini was obliged to enter into a long altercation with the monks, who, for some time, pretended to doubt his being a European. At length, however, they consented to his admittance, when another dispute arose concerning *the manner* of his entering their inhospitable residence, as the monks insisted upon drawing him up by the rope, and he demanded entrance by an iron wicket, which, it seems, was never opened but on particular occasions. Hussein now threatened the fathers with the most dreadful effects of his resentment, if they hesitated any longer to comply with his friend's request; and, in consequence of his authoritative commands, the wicket was opened to the travellers, who were first conducted to the chapel, and afterwards furnished with a scanty supper of plain boiled rice.

Next morning, Sonnini was reminded, by his guide, of what passed on the preceding evening, and of the extreme difficulty with which he had been extricated from his perilous situation. Hussein candidly acknowledged, that he could not hope for such success, on another occasion, nor could he yet tell what might be the result of his recent interference, as, in case he should ever be discovered by the Arabs, in company with the same party, his life would most probably be sacrificed to their resentment. He therefore observed that, an immediate return was indispensibly necessary to himself, and concluded by an offer of conducting our author back by the same route he had come; but, as Sonnini had now reached the middle of the deserts, he was unwilling to quit them without making a few observations; and Hussein, though evidently vexed at his determination, embraced him with affection, and quitted him with many kind adieus.

The convent, in which Sonnini was now left with his companions, is, by the Coptic cenobites, denominated Zaidi el Baramous; and by the Arabs, Kasr Zaidi. It is an enclosure of high walls without any gate, as that name cannot possibly be given to a small wicket, which is never opened more than twice or thrice in a year. Persons coming in, and going out, are drawn up, or lowered down, by a strong rope and pulley. The building consists entirely of soft, calcareous stones, containing fossil shells. Within the walls is a small fort, surrounded by ditches, and furnished with a drawbridge, which yields a retreat to the monks, when the banditti of the deserts succeed in forcing the exterior inclosure. In the fort is a church, a cistern, a quantity of

and every thing, in fact, to enable the fathers to sustain a long siege. Here, also, are the books belonging to the community, of which they are extremely tenacious, though they suffer them to lie neglected on the ground, covered with dust, and partly destroyed by vermin.

The church is a simple edifice, with no other ornament, than a few bad pictures and some ostrich eggs. The service is performed in Arabic and modern Coptic, that is to say, in Greek Coptic, for the literal Coptic, or the language of the Pharaohs is totally unknown to the present Copts. The gospel is read in Arabic, and the prayers are said in modern Coptic; yet none of the monks can speak that language with propriety. It seems, indeed, almost impossible to give a just representation of the confusion that frequently prevails in the course of their devotions. Sometimes one person will have a particular psalm or anthem, and another will insist upon singing a different one; a dispute then ensues, and is frequently followed by blows: in the mean time, somebody begins to chaunt a prayer, which is followed by the* whole choir, and thus the quarrel is terminated. During his stay at the convent, Sonnini regularly attended their devotions, and carefully imitated the ceremonies and gestures of the monks. Each of his people did the same, and there sometimes occurred such comic scenes and ridiculous situations, as totally destroyed their gravity, and obliged them to give an involuntary offence, by their laughter,

* The singing consists of Turkish and Arabic airs, accompanied by cymbals; the noise of which, together with their discordant music makes the church re-echo with a medley of jarring sounds.

to the members of the community. In the performance of their worship, the Copts neither sit, kneel, nor stand upright; but remain upon their feet, with their bodies bent forward, and support themselves on a kind of crutch. The priest celebrates mass with water, and consecrates common bread, which he cuts in pieces, and mixes with water. This makes a kind of soup, of which he eats a few spoonfuls, and then administers the remainder to such of his brethren or attendants as are present. The sacred vases are only a kind of glass plates, similar to those used at a European dessert. After the communion, the officiating priest washes his hands, and places himself at the door of the chancel, whither every person of the congregation walks in procession, to present his face to be stroked or sprinkled with the holy water. Some little half-baked loaves are then distributed, though not without much altercation, and the service concludes. The person who officiates at the altar in celebrating mass, is arrayed in a sort of white shirt, covered with crosses, and made with a cowl; but, during the other prayers, he only wears a large fillet of white linen, twisted round his head, in manner of a turban, and adorned with similar little crosses.

"These Copts," says our author, "are fond of a rapid succession of rites and ceremonies, and are continually in motion during the time of service. The officiating monk, especially, is every moment employed in scattering incense over the saints, books, and pictures, kissing his left hand, or applying his hand to the forehead of every person present. When all his rounds are finished, he gives his benediction, bearing in his hand a small cross and lighted taper, and

Qual of the congregation, previous to his departure from the church, kisses a little cushion, covered with a greasy cloth; then a cross; and afterwards rolls his head on the shrine of the saints. This shrine is said, by the Arabs, to contain no other reliques than bones of camels or asses, that have perished in the desert, and have been collected by the monks; but the latter affirm, that it is the repository of the bodies of seven saints, among whom, Maximous and Domadious are mentioned as the objects of peculiar veneration.

There were but three priests and a few friars in the convent, at the period of our traveller's researches; but they were frequently visited by the Coptic cultivators, who came to do penance for their sins and to supply the fathers with the means of subsistence. The common provisions of the community are chiefly the alms of the rich Copts, at Cairo, and are conveyed to the monastery twice or thrice a year, by caravans of camels. Their meals, which simply consist of buiscuit, made of flour of lentils and rice boiled in salt and water; detestable cheese; and, by chance a little honey, are usually eaten in a refectory, while one of the monastics reads for the edification of his brethren: their only beverage is a brackish and unpalatable water.

The cells of the monks are vaulted and exceedingly low, and their dress perfectly accords with their wretched habitations. A kind of robe and a long shirt, of black linen, constitute the whole of their apparel; the dismal colour of which, together with their dark complexion, mean look, and short stature, combines to render the Coptic monastics the most ugly of mankind, as they are likewise the most filthy and disgusting.

By the side of the convent are some ruins, said to be the remains of the ancient edifice. A very deep well is still discernible, to which there is a descent by a flight of steps. In the vicinity there is also found a quantity of the common gypsum, known to the Arabs by the name of guips, and of laminated gypsum, or lapis specularis.

The monastery of Zaidi el Baramous is not the only one existing in this desolate country. From the top of the walls may be seen the small, uninhabited house of St. Maximous; another convent, called Zaidi Sourian, and a small deserted building, originally designed for the residence of a kiaschef, but now affording shelter to the persons who come thither in quest of natron.

At the distance of one day's journey, to the west, is a dry canal, formerly the bed of a communication between the lakes Morris and Marcotis. It abounds with rocks, and erite, or eagle stones, are commonly found in its environs.

On the 13th of January, our author having dispatched a peasant from the convent to hire some Bedouins at Terane, who might conduct him out of the desert, ten of these persons arrived with a camel and some asses. One of them, who had shot a flamingo, at the natron lakes, presented it to Sonnini, who having passed several days in a state of rigorous abstinence, gave it to his companions to roast. At the moment, however, when they were preparing to make an excellent meal, the monks fell upon it with the most disgusting voracity, and speedily ended the repast.

Anxious to quit these disagreeable men, our author now proposed to make them some compensation for the entertainment he had received.

though wretched in the extreme. The superior told him that it was proper he should first bestow something on the monastery; next on the embellishment of the church; and lastly, on himself and the poor. At the conclusion of his enumeration of wants, Sonnini asked what sum would be equivalent to the whole expence; when, after a few moments spent in calculation, the monk replied, that five or six hundred sequins would be sufficient. "A trifle to be sure," says our author, "for five days lodging and board, on lentil bread, with lentils boiled in salt and water." As, however, our traveller's purse had been considerably lightened in passing through the hands of the Arabs, and as the stipulated agreement with Hussein had taken several sequins, he had but six remaining, which he accordingly offered to the superior; but the avaricious wretch fell into a most violent passion; launched out into invectives, and swore by all the saints of his church, that Sonnini should soon repent his ingratitude. He even ventured to affirm, that *heaven* would soon send some robbers to the convent, who should instantly follow the traveller's route, and avenge the quarrel. At this audacious behaviour, our author lost all patience; and would certainly have levelled the monastic with the ground, had not the Bedouin guides interposed and separated the contending parties.

Sonnini was now preparing to quit the convent with his companions, when the old monk sent to request the six sequins that had been offered, and as the travellers rode from the edifice, they discerned this villain in the act of imploring blessings on their journey, from that sacred abode, which

which he had so recently invoked to crush them with all its maledictions.

From Zaidi el Baramous, our author travelled along deep gorges, parallel to the great hills, for about six miles, when he entered the monastery of Zaidi Sourian, whose name indicates that it was formerly in the possession of Syrian monks, who have been succeeded by the Copts. This convent is built upon a similar plan to that of Zaidi el Baramous, but it is laid out in a much better and more convenient manner. The ancient Syrian church is still standing, and is described by our traveller as being tolerably handsome. Upon one of the pillars are cut, the names of several European visitants; and the church is embellished with sculpture and paintings in fresco. This building, however, is not used by the Copts, who have built another church, in the form of a cross. The little fort, or place of retreat, is as well constructed as that of the other convent, and the monks are apparently less filthy in their persons, and less ferocious in their dispositions. The superior, seen by Sonnini, was a man turned of thirty, absolutely without any beard. As the beard is an appendage, in this country, that creates respect, the monk was much dissatisfied with his personal defect, and earnestly entreated the European to point out some method, by which he might obtain such an embellishment to his face.

In a little garden belonging to the monastics are a few date trees, some small olive trees, and one almond tree. Among a variety of esculent plants, is observable the liblah, a species of large, perennial, kidney bean, that grows very high. It
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leaves are of a lively green, its pods, broad and elongated, are of the same colour, with a border of deep purple. The seeds which they contain are oval, and variegated with yellow, black, and brown. This species of pulse is universally cultivated in Egypt, and the pods are a common article of food. An immense tamarind tree grows in one of the courts, and is considered by the monastics as an effect of miraculous vegetation. "A St. Ephraim," say they, "left his staff at the gate of a pious brother, to whom he was paying a visit; it instantly took root, shot forth branches, and soon became a large tamarind tree." To add to this miracle, they affirm, that it is the only tree of the species in Egypt. This, however, is not consistent with truth, for, notwithstanding the scarceness of tamarind trees in that country, there are a few plants of it to be seen in the gardens of Rossetta, and the pods, stones, and pulp of the tamarind, boiled up with sugar, may be purchased in every Egyptian market. This coarse sweetmeat is brought by the caravans from the interior of Africa, and forms an indispensable article of provision, for persons who traverse the deserts; they eat it on account of its cooling quality, and to allay the insufferable thirst that is excited by those fiery regions. The few trees that shade one part of the convent, invite thither some birds, which diffuse a degree of cheerfulness, and the water of the well is highly superior, both in taste and quality, to that of the monastery of Zaidi el Baramous.

Quitting Zaidi Sourian, on the 14th, at three o'clock in the morning, our author determined *not to visit any other convent, though there were two more in the desert, and accordingly pur-*

his journey till the next morning, when he reached the village Etrifs, on the western bank of the Nile. The camp of the Bedouin guides was pitched in the vicinity of this place, and here the travellers were entertained with equal cordiality and hospitality.

END OF VOL. XXIII.

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